

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION  
FOI/PA  
DELETED PAGE INFORMATION SHEET  
FOI/PA# 1320646-0

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(12/31/1995)

# FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Precedence: ROUTINE

Date: 11/04/1998

To: New York

From: New York

Approved By: [REDACTED]

Drafted By: [REDACTED]

Case ID #: 288-NY-NEW

Title: Electronic Disturbance Theater;

CITA  
OO:NY

Synopsis: Request case to be opened and assigned to SA [REDACTED]

Details: Case is predicated upon information provided by AUSA [REDACTED] Eastern District of Virginia. Subject Electronic Disturbance Theater (EDT) is a group claiming on its Internet website to protest various national and international policies through orchestrated attacks on computer systems. The attacks employ a program called "FloodNet" which causes a denial of service to the target computer. EDT's Internet website solicits visitors to participate in coordinated attacks of a computer system chosen by EDT. Participants simply click on the FloodNet icon on the EDT's website at a predetermined and published date and time. This icon then initiates a Java applet which repeatedly reloads files from a victim's computer system at a unusually high rate. This activity, when multiplied by many users, will cause service interruptions and possibly crash the server computer unless early detection is made and countermeasures are implemented. The visitors do not control the destination of the attack, rather it is programed into the applet on the EDT's website.

The EDT claims that it designed the FloodNet program and has attacked computer systems owned by the government of Mexico, the Department of Defense and the German Stock Exchange.

PER TELCAL W/ [REDACTED] @ NIPC ON 11/5/98:

- [REDACTED] SAYS THERE IS NO EXISTING CASE ON EDT OR ANY OF THE INDIVIDUALS

- HE ENCOURAGED [REDACTED] TO OPEN A CRIMINAL CASE

OPEN OR REOPEN CASE [REDACTED]

ORIGIN [REDACTED] DATE 11/6/98  
SUPV. [REDACTED]

288-M-268557-1

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To: New York From: New York  
Re: 288-NY-NEW, 11/04/1998

The following proprietors of EDT are believed to be New York University Graduate students located in New York, New York:

Descriptive Data:

Main Subject

Name -

Last:

First:

Race:

Sex:

DOB:

SOC:

SOC:

Main Subject

Name -

Last:

First:

Middle:

Race:

Sex:

DOB:

POB:

Address -

House #:

Street Name:

Unit:

City:

State:

Postal Code:

Main Subject

Name -

Last:

First:

Race:

Sex:

DOB:

Address -

House #:

Street Name:

City:

State:

Postal Code:

Phone:

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To: New York From: New York  
Re: 288-NY-NEW, 11/04/1998

Main Subject

Name -

Last:

First:

Middle:

Race:

Sex:

DOB:

Address -

House #:

Street Name:

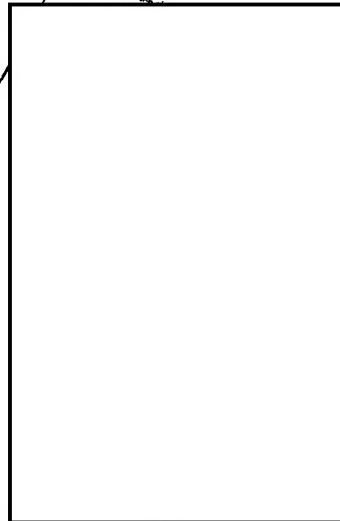
Unit:

City:

State:

Postal Code:

Phone:



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♦♦

(File No.)

288-NY-268557

DO NOT ENTER ANY MORE  
1A's see vol. 2 OF 1A's

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☐ Yes ☒ No

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reference:

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(Communication Enclosing Material)

☐ Original notes re interview of

PRINTOUT OF ECD WEB PAGE

### Disposition

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# Electronic Civil Disobedience



## Next Action on November 22. The School of the Americas.

Electronic Disturbance  
Theater  
Hacks Frankfurt Stock  
Exchange

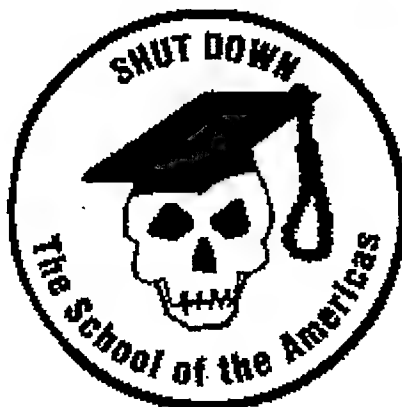
SWARM Chronology

INTERNET GROUP TAKES ON  
THE GENETIX  
MULTINATIONALS

Recent Virtual Sit-in against  
the NAB and the FCC

# School of the Americas Watch

[SOA Graduates](#)  
[SOA Manuals](#)  
[Books and Videos](#)  
[Press Releases and News Reports](#)



[Act Now!](#)  
[Previous Protests](#)  
[Interviews with SOA Watch](#)  
[Contact SOA Watch](#)  
[FAQ](#)

## Close the School of Assassins

[How You Can Help](#)

[Current status of HR 611 and S. 980](#)  
[Bills to Close the School of the Americas](#)

The US Army School of Assassins, based in Fort Benning, Georgia, trains Latin American soldiers in combat, counter-insurgency, and counter-narcotics. [Graduates of the School of Assassins](#) have been responsible for some of the worst human rights abuses in Latin America. Among the SOA's nearly 60,000 graduates are some of the most notorious dictators of Latin America: Manuel Noreiga and Omar Torrijos of [Panama](#), Leopoldo Galtieri and Roberto Viola of [Argentina](#), Juan Velasco Alvarado of [Peru](#), Guillermo Rodriguez of [Ecuador](#), and Hugo Banzer Suarez of [Bolivia](#).

Lower-level graduates of the School of Assassins have been responsible for some of the most notorious massacres and human rights abuses including the assassination of Archbishop Oscar Romero and the El Mozote Massacre.

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[NEW! Protest to Close the SOA](#) - November 1998

[NEW! Support Newly Imprisoned SOA Watch Activists](#)

[Latin America Working Group Summary of Vote on Amendment to Defund the SOA](#)

[How did your Representative vote?](#)

Army's School of the Americas survives another House vote - Columbus Ledger Enquirer, September 18, 1998

Statement by Imprisoned SOA Watch Activist Ken Kennon - August 1998

Statement by Imprisoned SOA Watch Activist Christopher Jones - August 13, 1998

~~Added~~ Urgent Action on Upcoming Vote to Close the SOA!!

Colombian Human Rights Abuses Linked to SOA Graduates - July 23 Press Release from Rep. Joseph Kennedy

Statement by Joseph Kennedy About SOA Graduates and Human Rights Abuses in Colombia - July 23 Press Conference

The SOA and Colombia: A Dishonor Roll - Report by the Latin America Working Group

Double the number of newspaper editorials before the vote!

SOA Watch Summer 1998 Newsletter

SOA Instructors, Speakers & Hall of Famers: And These Are The Role Models?

The School of the Americas & Colombia: A Dishonor Roll

Summer 1998 Urgent Congressional Work!

The Truth Cannot Be Silenced II Delegation to Honduras and Guatemala

Audio Cassette of November 1997 Fort Benning Vigil Available - from Maryknoll World Productions

Never Again Report Links SOA Graduates to Human Rights Abuses in Guatemala - May 13, 1998

Prisoners for change - by imprisoned SOA Watch Director Carol Richardson, May 1998

Lend support to imprisoned SOA Watch activists - 20 SOA Watch activists are serving six month sentences; Send them a letter or postcard.

~~UPDATED~~ Act Now to Put the School of Assassins Video on Public Television!!

SOA officials, Maryknoll Order hold closed debate - Columbus Ledger Enquirer, May 5, 1998

Imprisoned SOA Watch Activist Rita Lucey on Whether You Should Cross the Line Again - April 1998

Open Letter to Rep. Nethercutt from Imprisoned SOA Watch Activist Paddy Inman

Open Letter from Imprisoned SOA Watch Activist Christopher Jones - April 26, 1998

Desolación y dolor durante tres décadas - Prensa Libre, Guatemala, 29 abril 1998

Over 1000 Converge on White House to Close the SOA - April 27, 1998

Statement of SOA Activist J.P. Liteky - After his two felony convictions for tossing red dye on the Pentagon

Generation Action - A three day conference held by the Catskill Bruderhof, including a forum on the SOA

SOA Activists Receive Award from Local ACLU Chapter - April 2, 1998

Amnesty International USA Passes Resolution to close the SOA

SOA protester learns to deal with solitude - Columbus Ledger Enquirer, April 15, 1998

Columbus viewers won't see SOA documentary - Columbus Ledger Enquirer,

April 14, 1998

Imprisoned SOA Watch Activist Ken Kennon: Welcome to Fort Bliss

Appeal your Exclusion from Fort Benning

SOA Watch Activist's Parents' Letter to the Editor - published March 24, 1998, in the Oregonian

Solidarity Letter from Guatemala Returned Refugee Community

SOA Talking Points - by the Latin America Working Group

Letter from Imprisoned SOA Watch Director Carol Richardson - February 26, 1998

Latin American Working Group Response to SOA Certification Report - February 12, 1998

Certifications and Report on the SOA - by the US Army, January 1998

Unpublished Letter to the Editor of the Dallas Morning News - by Cliff Pearson, Dec. 3, 1997

Letter to the Editor of the New York Post by Walter C. Ayres, November 25, 1997; published Dec. 11, 1997

Urgent Action on the SOA 25 - Accion Urgente Sobre el SOA 25

Rep. Joe Kennedy's Dear Colleague Letter on the SOA and Chiapas - January 12, 1998

Open Letter to President Clinton - by former SOA Instructor Joseph Blair, Jan. 15, 1998

Protesters Rights are Trampled - Op-Ed by former SOA Instructor Joseph Blair, November 22, 1997

Unpublished Letter to Editor of Columbus Ledger-Enquirer - by former SOA Instructor Joseph Blair, February 18, 1997

Just More of the Usual SOA Spin - Op-Ed by former SOA Instructor Joseph Blair,

January 22, 1997

Army Picks on Patriotic Protesters - Op-Ed by former SOA Instructor Joseph Blair,  
February 12, 1996

Open Letter to Magistrate Slaughter, who sentenced three SOA protesters to six months  
in jail

New Jersey Assembly Passes Resolution Calling for Closure of the SOA - Press Release from  
the New Jersey Assembly Republicans, Dec. 18, 1997

Text of State of New Jersey Resolution to Shutdown the SOA - passed December 18, 1997

Op-Ed by former SOA Instructor Joseph Blair - April 10, 1997

Op-Ed by SOA Watch supporter Kenneth Kennon - April 11, 1997

Op-Ed by former SOA Instructor Joseph Blair - July 20, 1993

NEW! New Video: School of the Americas: An Insider Speaks Out

Former SOA Instructor Major Joe Blair's Speech at the Nov. 97 SOA Vigil

Why protest on November 16?

Who are the SOA 28?

Letter of support from Central American University in El Salvador - November 14, 1997

School of the Americas forum - Express your opinions here

SOA Funding Vote Loses 210-217 - September 4, 1997 - See how your Representative voted - Read the  
Floor discussion on the SOA

North Central New York Conference United Methodist Church Resolution on the Closure of the School of  
the Americas - May 31, 1997

**Act Now!!**

Current cosponsors of HR 611 and S. 980, the bills that would close the SOA - 138 so far for HR 611 and  
13 for S. 980!!

Compose your letter online, print it out and send it your Congressional Representative.

On February 5, 1997, Rep. Joe Kennedy introduced legislation in the US House of Representatives that  
would close the School of the Americas. On June 27, 1997, Senator Durbin introduced a companion bill in  
the Senate. You can help by writing your Congressional Representative and asking him/her to support HR

611 and asking your Senator to support S. 980.

You can download an [ASCII text](#) version or a [PDF](#) version of HR 611, the House bill to close the School of Assassins. You can also get the [ASCII text](#) or [PDF](#) versions of S. 980. You need [Adobe Acrobat](#) in order to read the PDF documents.

Who voted to close the SOA in 1993 and 1994? [Click here!](#)

## Reports

[Rep. Joe Kennedy's Report on the SOA and Executive Summary](#) - March 6, 1997

[Rep. Joe Kennedy's Response to Pentagon Report](#) - Feb. 21, 1997

[Pentagon Admits School of the Americas Taught Torture](#) - September 20, 1996

[Government Accounting Office Report on the School of the Americas](#) - text (August 1996)

[In Adobe Portable Document Format](#)

[Intelligence Oversight Board cites SOA](#) - July 1, 1996

[Summary of UN Truth Commission Report on El Salvador](#) - 1993

## Previous Protests

[Washington DC Protest to close the SOA](#) - April 26-28, 1998

[Maximum Sentences for Three SOA Protesters](#) - November 19, 1997

[28 SOA Protesters Face Possible Prison Terms](#) - November 18, 1997

[Behind the Barriers](#) - A report on the Nov. 16 protest by Lorraine Krofchok of Grandmothers for Peace

[SOA Protest Pictures](#) - from Pat Loughlin

[601 Arrested During Funeral Procession at Fort Benning to Call for the closing of the SOA](#) - November 17, 1997

[Seven Arrested in SOA Protest](#) - Sep. 29, 1997

[Capital Campesinos and Pentagon Police](#) - Paddy Inman's story of the Pentagon SOA Protest, May 21, 1997

[NPR's All Things Considered Coverage of the Pentagon protest](#) - April 29, 1997 ([RealAudio](#) needed.)

[Grave Diggers Arrested at Pentagon for Protesting SOA](#) - April 28, 1997

[One Thousand Expected for Protest of the US Army School of the Americas](#) - April 22, 1997

[Schedule of Events for Vigil and Lobby Action to Close the School of the Americas](#) - April 19 to 29, 1997

[Protest to close the School of the Americas, April 19-29, 1997 in Washington, D.C.](#)

[Article by Ed Kinane about his experience being arrested for protesting to close the SOA](#)

[My Trip to the School of Assassins Protest](#) - by Andy McKenna

[Bury My Cross at the SOA](#) - Paddy Inman's story of the Nov. 16, 1996, SOA Protest at Fort Benning

[Statement of Fr. Paul Locatelli, S.J., President of Santa Clara University, at the Nov. 16, 1996, vigil](#)

[Sixty arrested at vigil to close the School of the Americas](#) - Nov. 16, 1996

[Three Hundred Religious Leaders Hold Prayer Vigil to Close the School of the Americas](#) - August 16, 1996



## Interviews with SOA Watch

Interview with SOA Watch activists Sr. Marge Eilerman and Kathleen Rumpf - in RealAudio on Democracy NOW!, March 4, 1998

SOA Update with guests Jennifer Harbury and Congressional Medal of Honor recipient Charles Liteky in RealAudio on Democracy NOW!, March 3, 1998

NPR Morning Edition - February 27, 1998 - interviews with Rev. Nick Cardell, Sr. Mary Kay Flanagan, and Sr. Rita Steinhagen (RealAudio needed.)

Interview with SOA Protestor Rita Lucey - Grass Roots News Network, January 27, 1988

Life, Death and the "SOA" in Central America - Full Logic Reverse, November 27, 1997

NPR's Talk of the Nation - 7/23/97 with Jack Nelson-Pallmeyer, author of *School of Assassins* and Steven M. Schneebaum, Board of Visitors of the SOA (RealAudio needed.)

Transcript of Interview with Father Bourgeois - January 21, 1997

Interview with Carol Richardson of SOA Watch on Mike Thornton's Full Logic Reverse radio show [You need RealAudio to listen to the interview]

## Books and Videos

School of the Americas: An Insider Speaks Out

A 15-minute video of an interview with former SOA instructor Major Joseph Blair

School of Assassins

A 200-page book on the SOA and the efforts by SOA Watch to shut it down.

School of Assassins

an 18-minute documentary about the School of the Americas; nominated for an Academy Award in 1995.

Inside the School of Assassins

A 1-hour documentary that updates and expands *School of Assassins* with testimony from those trained by the SOA and victimized by its graduates.

The U.S. Army SOA Site by the SOA Public Affairs Office. See what the SOA has to say about its human rights record and its use of manuals that taught torture, extortion, and other illegal methods. (Hint: Don't spend too much time looking - they don't have anything to say)

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## Contact SOA Watch

For more information or to donate or help, please [email us](#) or contact:

School of the Americas Watch	SOA Watch - DC Office
Yvonne Dilling	Heather Dean
P.O. Box 3330	P.O. Box 4566
Columbus, GA 31903-0330	Washington, DC 20017-0566
(706) 682-5369	Phone/Fax (202) 234-3440



[Puigjane](#) - [HR links](#) - [Worldwide](#) - [Derechos](#)

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This page is maintained by [Mike Katz-Lacabe](#) and [Margarita Lacabe](#). Last updated October 25, 1998.

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# Electronic Disturbance Theater Hacks Frankfurt Stock Exchange!

*EDT NEWS BULLETIN SUNDAY SEPTEMBER 13, 1998*



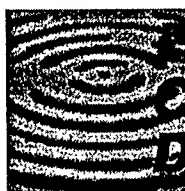
At about 9:00 p.m. on Friday, September 11, the Electronic Disturbance Theater entered the main trading floor of the Frankfurt Stock Exchange in Germany, two days after engaging its FloodNet software against the stock exchange's web site and the web sites of Mexico's President and the Pentagon

According to a recent Wired News story about the September 9 SWARM action, Frankfurt Stock Exchange's security was informed about the automated reload features of FloodNet but stock exchange officials said they were not worried believing that the symbolic gesture of FloodNet would have minimal impact.

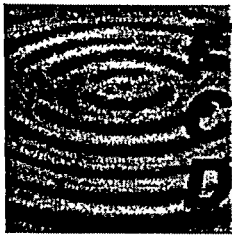


Since April the Electronic Disturbance Theater has engaged in a campaign of Electronic Civil Disobedience in solidarity with the Zapatistas in Chiapas and against Mexican President Zedillo, the Mexican government, the U.S. government and the U.S. military for their combined involvement in low intensity warfare in Chiapas.

The Electronic Disturbance Theater inaugurated SWARM at the recent Ars Electronic Festival on InfoWar in Linz, Austria from September 7 to 12. The group's next action is scheduled for September 16, Mexican Independence Day.



**Electronic  
Civil  
Disobedience**



# **Electronic Civil Disobedience**

## **Chronology of SWARM**

**September 10, 1998**

**Linz, Austria**

“We want all who walk the roads of truth to unite hearts.”  
--The Zapatistas

To our Indigenous sisters and brothers of other organizations:  
To the Mexican people:  
To the people and governments of the world:

Dear sisters and brothers here is a long tale for your enjoyment:

**April 10**

The Electronic Disturbance Theater initiates its first act of Electronic Civil Disobedience to Stop the War in Mexico and in support of the Zapatistas in Chiapas, Mexico, which are followed by actions, using its FloodNet software, on May 10, June 10, June 28, July 3, July 19, and August 7. See <http://www.nyu.edu/projects/wray/ecd.html> for details.

**End of April**

Ricardo Dominguez of The Electronic Disturbance Theater writes a SWARM proposal for the Ars Electronica Festival on InfoWar and communicates this with festival organizers while they are visiting New York.

**July 12**

Stefan Wray of the Electronic Disturbance Theater arrived in Amsterdam and began to inform cyber activists and artists about the ECD project and SWARM.

**August 25, Tuesday**

The Electronic Disturbance Theater issues first bulletin about the upcoming SWARM action on September 9 and calls for a fall campaign of hybrid actions on the street and on the Net

In solidarity with the Zapatistas, indigenous peoples in Chiapas, others resisting the Mexican government, the global pro-Zapatista movement, and people everywhere struggling against neoliberalism and the global economy, the Electronic Disturbance Theater urges SWARM actions, multiple acts of Electronic Civil Disobedience, on Wednesday, September 9, 1998. (<http://www.nyu.edu/projects/wray/ecd.html>)

To demonstrate our capacity for simultaneous global electronic actions and to emphasize the multiple nature of our opponents, FloodNet will target three web sites in Mexico, the United States, and Europe representing three important sectors: government, military, and financial.

In Mexico, FloodNet will target President Zedillo's web site, (<http://www.presidencia.gob.mx/>) an obvious choice and one we have made before. In the United States, FloodNet will target the Pentagon, (<http://www.defenselink.mil/>) also an obvious choice given the level of U.S. military and intelligence involvement in Mexico. And in Germany, FloodNet will target the Frankfurt Stock Exchange, (<http://www.exchange.de/>) a less obvious choice, but one that makes sense as it is a key European financial site with high symbolic value and as Germany is a major player in the global neoliberal economy.

**September 4, Friday**

Stefan Wray of the Electronic Disturbance Theater arrives in Linz, Austria in the late afternoon and joins the HEART encampment (Hackers Electronic Art) outside the OpenX exhibit where from where SWARM was activated.

**September 5, Saturday**

Announcements about the SWARM action on September 9 are crafted and begin to be sent out over the Net late that night.

In solidarity with the Zapatistas in Chiapas, Mexico, and with people everywhere struggling against the global neoliberal economy, the Electronic Disturbance Theater calls for multiple acts of Electronic Civil Disobedience (SWARM), on Wednesday, September 9, 1998.

The Electronic Disturbance Theater issues this call in connection with its participation in the Ars Electronica Festival on Infowar, held in Linz, Austria, from September 7 to 12. (<http://web.aec.at/infowar>)

Actions will begin on Sept. 9 at 11:00 a.m. (Linz time) for a 24 hour

period. Other start times are: Berlin 11:00 a.m.; London 10:00 a.m.; New York 5:00 a.m.; Mexico City 4:00 a.m.; and San Francisco 2:00 a.m.

Our FloodNet software will target three web sites in Mexico, the United States, and Europe representing three important sectors: government, military, and financial.

- 1) President Zedillo (<http://www.presidencia.gob.mx>)
- 2) The Pentagon (<http://www.defenselink.mil>)
- 3) The Frankfurt Stock Exchange (<http://www.exchange.de>)

### **September 6, Sunday**

Ricardo Dominguez of the Electronic Disturbance Theater arrives in Linz, Austria at 3:30 a.m. after a 5 day train trip from Revoluting in Manchester, England (<http://yourserver.co.uk>) where he presented a workshop and a panel on Electronic Civil Disobedience and spread news of the upcoming SWARM action against Mexico President Zedillo, the Pentagon, and the Frankfurt Stock Exchange.

Spanish versions of SWARM announcements are distributed via email

Electronic Disturbance Theater announced to the micro-power radio movement in the United States that it is prepared to release versions of FloodNet that can be applied during the upcoming "Showdown" with the Federal Communications Commission in Washington, DC on October 4 and 5.

### **September 7, Monday**

SWARM installation is completed. Disturbance Theater meets with Ars Electronica press office to attempt to obtain email addresses of journalists.

Critiques of FloodNet from within hacker community begin to be raised. One element of this critique is that FloodNet will not only impact targeted web sites but also begin to clog up the pipelines between participants computers and targeted sites

### **September 8, Tuesday**

Ricardo Dominguez and Stefan Wray meet with members of the HEART and other hackers to discuss the efficacy of the FloodNet software from a technical perspective. It is agreed that the hackers and critics will write a statement outlining their concerns

After meeting with HEART hackers and others, Dominguez and Wray test FloodNet by activating it on 16 machines in the OpenX. There appears to be no problem with using this number of machines.

RTMARK distributes announcement about the SWARM action to a massive

list of email contacts.

In solidarity with the Zapatistas in Mexico, the Electronic Disturbance Theater will launch its FloodNet software against the web sites of Mexican President Zedillo, the Pentagon, and the Frankfurt Stock Exchange on Wed., September 9, from its base at the Ars Electronica InfoWar Festival. These actions are part of the Electronic Disturbance Theater's SWARM presentation at the festival now happening in Linz, Austria.

Since April the Electronic Disturbance Theater has used its FloodNet software to engage in virtual sit-ins on the web sites of the Mexican government and the Clinton White House. Such electronic actions are designed to demonstrate collective and world-wide support for the Zapatistas in Chiapas and their opposition to the Zedillo government with its global neoliberal economic agenda.

The SWARM actions on September 9, targeting government, military, and financial web sites in three countries, will commence at 11:00 a.m. (Linz ) for a 24-hour period. Participants around the world will set their Internet browsers to the FloodNet page.

EDT receives messages of solidarity: "Keep up the good work! I placed your link on my page:

<http://www.angelfire.com/co/COMMONSENSE/wakeup.links.html>"

### **September 9, Wednesday**

At 7:32 a.m., Ricardo Dominguez received a threatening phone call, from someone presumed to be of the Mexican government, in his hotel room in Linz, Austria. Ars Electronica organizers and the Linz police have been informed and we await an official statement from the AEC organization regarding this incident.

Dominguez said: "I picked up and in very clear Spanish, Mexican Spanish, they said "We know who you are. We know where you are at. We know where your family is. We are watching you. Do not go downstairs. Do not make your presentation. Because you know what the situation is. This is not a game." And they hung up."

<http://www.aec.at/infowar/attack.html>

At 11:00 a.m. the SWARM action commenced. FloodNet was directed toward Mexican President Zedillo, the Pentagon, and the Frankfurt Stock Exchange.

At 11:00 Danish television interviews us. Later they post SWARM action on their web site and will use footage for television and audio for radio programs.

We receive requests to utilize FloodNet in Australia. "Having received info

about the floodnet Zapatista action, I am wondering (in a purely speculative manner) about the viability of a similar action directed at the developers of the Jabiluka Uranium mine in Kakadu National Park (a world heritage listed area) in Australia's Northern Territory."

Between the action commencing and a presentation in the ClosedX we noticed that countermeasures had been initiated against FloodNet. Wray began to send email to technicians in the United States to ascertain the source of the problem and to try to stop the attack.

At 1:05 p.m. Dominguez and Wray presented the history the Electronic Disturbance Theater at the ClosedX section of Ars Electronica. The presentation was followed by a useful discussion, continuing the critique and dialogue that had been initiated with a meeting hackers from the HEART and others.

Part of the critique of FloodNet was harsh: "FloodNet is both ineffective due to the upstream cache and pure evil, since it represents an abuse of the network. Even if the load was to take down a server (ignoring the free speech implications for a moment, free speech you want for yourself but deny to those with whom you disagree), you would not only impact communications with the target site, but also to those around it. FloodNet is \*unacceptable\* network abuse. As bad as spam, if not worse."

At 3:00 p.m. Dominguez is on the radio with  
<http://thing.at/orfkunstradio/STATIC/>

The Disturbance Theater begins to receive messages such as "Countermeasured effectively kept me from participating this morning; I'm wondering if you could give me an update on how things went." Another person wrote: "what's up ? seems we still get the java attack. any news?"

Within a half hour before the InfoWeapon contest award, Wray, a doctoral student at New York University receives an email message from Stephen Tihor, Senior System Manager, System & Network Security Group, Academic Computing Facility, at NYU stating that New York University had been contacted by the Department of Defense regarding the Electronic Civil Disobedience web site that is based on an NYU server

Mr. Wray,

We have received a recent complaint from someone within the DISA of the DOD regarding the ECD web site you are maintaining on your page. As you know freedom of speech is a vital part of the academic process and is one to which we are dedicated just as we are to insure that NYU is a good network citizen.



At 7:05 p.m. the Electronic Disturbance Theater made an opening announcement at the InfoWeapon Contest award ceremony to inform Ars Electronica participants that 1) Ricardo Dominguez had received a threatening phone call, 2) a hostile Java applet had been launched against FloodNet, and the 3) Stefan Wray had received an email message from New York University that system administrators there had been contacted by the DISA of DOD about the ECD page.

In the evening we receive an email message from Niall McKay of Wired News stating: "I presume that your attack was unsuccessful since the sites seem to be up and running?" We later learn that McKay contacts the DOD to ask about the countermeasure.

Later in the evening the SWARM base in Linz received email from Brett Stalbaum of the Electronic Disturbance Theater, of CADRE in San Jose, California, that he had stopped the Hostile Java attack on FloodNet:

"The counter-attack is paused for now. Someone has authored an applet called "Hostile Applet", which unlike the Java Script counter-measure, we can not turn off. It's a real applet just like the FloodNet. I changed the html to avoid the pages where they put the applet, so we should be ok for a while.

We receive another message that someone's hard drive crashed from the hostile Java attack. We later receive information that this crash is not cause of FloodNet, but a function of the hostile Java attack on FloodNet.

### **September 10, Thursday**

The Electronic Disturbance Theater received information from a Wired News reporter that the DOD (Pentagon) admitted to having had initiated the countermeasure, the Hostile Java applet against FloodNet.

This morning when we tried to access the [defenselink.mil](http://defenselink.mil) page it would not come up on the browser

STATS for the first 6hours of the action flow in:

Total hits: 14281. Countries that joined the Zapatista action:

US Commercial, US Educational, Austria, Italy, United Kingdom, Germany, Switzerland, Australia, Canada, Non-Profit Organization, Belgium, Mexico, Denmark, Netherlands, France, United States, Spain, Greece, US Military, Japan, Finland, Romania, Argentina, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Iceland, US Government, Taiwan, Sweden, Chile, Russian Federation, Uruguay, Croatia (Hrvatska), Latvia, Malaysia, Lithuania, Slovak Republic, India, Brazil, New Zealand (Aotearoa), Singapore, Hungary, Slovenia, Colombia and Turkey.

P.S. A long story we know, but so it goes. Time for Cerveza.

P.P.S. The War Machine says no, The HEART says good idea Bad Code!

We say to War Machine we live and we say Ya Basta! To the HEART we Listen, we can learn—but you must give us the gift of CARE. We need More from the HEART than a NO. We now need the Wisdom of a Yes. A YES that can make all worlds possible.

**P.P.P.S** We have a choice: we can have a cynical attitude in the face of the media,

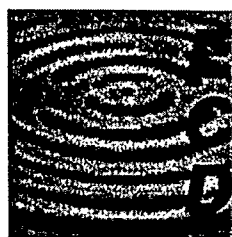
To say that nothing can be done about the dollar power that creates Itself in images, words, digital communication, and computer systems that Invades not just with an invasion of power, but with a way of seeing that World, of how they think the world should look. We could say, well, “that’s The way it is” and do nothing. Or we can simply assume incredulity: we Can say that any communication by the media monopolies is a total lie. We can ignore it and go about our lives.

But there is a third option is neither conformity, nor skepticism, nor Distrust—to construct a different way—to show the world what is Really happening—to have a critical worldview and to become Interested in the truth of what happens to the people of this World who wish to a voice in a world where only those with Power can be heard.

**P.P.P.P.S.**

They are kicking us out of here. Tomorrow the Ministers of European Culture will be in this space.

They will turn off all the machines in two hours. Good bye for a few days.



# **Electronic Civil Disobedience**

## **SHOWDOWN AT THE FCC!!!**

**FREE RADIO ACTIVISTS MARCH ON  
WASHINGTON**

**TO CONFRONT THE GLOBAL MEDIA  
MONOPOLY**

**AND THEIR MARIONNETTES IN GOVERNMENT!**

**Sunday and Monday, October 4 and 5**

**Calling all media activists, radio pirates and people for  
a democratic media:**

Come to Washington, DC for the first national mobilization for free radio. Microbroadcasters from around the country will gather for two days to share radio skills, organize alliances, speak out to the media and protest at the FCC and NAB buildings, culminating in a live broadcast straight into the offices of the people working so hard to shut us down.

Free Radio Berkeley, Radio Mutiny, Steal This Radio and other microstations have all broadcasted live in public and challenged the FCC to shut them down in the light of day, in front of the press and the Feds have never dared to show their face- this time, we're going to take it right to their doorstep and tell them that if they're so sure that their dumb law is worth enforcing, then the Chairman should come down from the 8th floor and put the cuffs on us himself. There will also be workshops to help new folks start stations, appointments will be made to lobby congress people, and press events will be held to show the true, diverse face of the microbroadcasting movement.

### **Schedule**

**Sunday, October 4:**

10-12 workshops (to be announced)  
12-1 lunch  
1-3 workshops (to be announced)  
3-5 speakout

5-6:30 dinner  
7 pm party/puppet making for demonstration

### **Monday, October 5:**

10:30 am MARCH AND PUPPET PARADE starts at Dupont Circle, goes to the Federal Communications Commission building, and then marches on to confront the National Association of Broadcasters. During these protests, we will flip the giant free speech switches, turn on our transmitters and strike a blow against the meta-marrionettes: A giant puppet of General Electric and Corporate America, which will in turn control a slightly smaller puppet of the National Association of Broadcasters, which in turn will operate a smaller puppet of the FCC, which in turn will be trying to stamp out microbroadcasters and our free speech rights. These demonstrations will also include a number of sneaky surprizes that are so cool that we can't even mention them here!

1:30pm meetings set up with people's congressional representatives for lobbying

4pm press event: What Can a Black Panther, a Free Market Think Tank Policy Analyst, an Anarchist Feminist, A Radio Engineer, A Public Health Worker and A Convenience Store Owner Agree Upon?

## **IT'S TIME TO LEGALIZE MICROBROADCASTING!**

So what's YOUR excuse not to come to the most excellent weekend of mayhem ever? Nothing. Then good- we'll see you there.

Bring a sleeping bag, cameras and recording devices, vehicles, some money to help this all come off, questions for the experts on pirate station operations, puppet materials, signs and banners, transmitters,

**AND ALL OF YOUR FRIENDS!**

contact info:

email: [petetridish@hotmail.com](mailto:petetridish@hotmail.com)

phone: Pete tri Dish 215-474-6459 or Amanda at 202-518-5644

p.o.box 179, College Park, MD 20741-0179

<http://www.radio4all.org>

<http://www.radio4all.org/freepacifica>



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FloodNet returns on October 4 & 5 Against the FCC with the  
Micro-radio movement. The Electronic Disturbance Theater

See The Zapatista Tactical FloodNet for a discussion of FloodNet's  
functionality, interactivity, philosophy, and as a form of conceptual art.





# The Zapatista Tactical FloodNet

A collaborative, activist and conceptual art work of the net  
by Brett Stalbaum

## FloodNet Functionality

Tactical FloodNet's automated features are used:

- 1) To reload a targeted web page several times per minute.
- 2) For the conceptual-artistic spamming of targeted server error logs.

The web site of an institution or symbol of Mexican neo-liberalism is targeted on a particular day. A link to FloodNet is then posted in a public call for participation in the tactical strike. Netsurfers follow this link; then by simply leaving their browser open the FloodNet Applet will automatically reload the target web page every few seconds. The intent is to disrupt access

to the targeted web site by flooding the host server with requests for that web site.

## Floodnet Interactivity

As FloodNet performs automatic reloads of the site in the background, slowing or halting access to the targeted server, FloodNet also encourages interaction on the part of individual protesters. Netsurfers may voice their political concerns on a targeted server via the "personal message" form which sends the surfer's own statement to the server error log. Additionally, a mouse click on the applet image (containing a representation of the targeted site), sends a predefined message to the server error log. In the current version of FloodNet, this process is automated as well.

## FloodNet as Conceptual Art

FloodNet is an example of conceptual net.art that empowers people through

activist/artistic expression. By the selection of phases for use in building the "bad" urls, for example using "human\_rights" to form the url "http://www.xxx.gb.mx/human\_rights", the FloodNet is able to upload messages

to server error logs by intentionally asking for a non-existent url. This causes the server to return messages like "human\_rights not found on this server." This works because of the way many http servers process requests for web pages that do not exist. FloodNet's Java applet asks the targeted server for a directory called, in this example, "human\_rights", but since that directory doesn't exist, the server returns the familiar "File not Found" or "Error 404" message, recording the bad request. This is a unique way to leave a message on that server.

Past versions of the FloodNet have tuned this idea to current events, such as during the June 10 protest when the names of the Zapatista farmers killed by the Mexican Army in military attacks on the autonomous village of El Bosque, were used in the construction of the "bad" urls. In an artistic sense, this is a way of remembering and honoring those who gave their lives in defense of their freedom. In a conceptual sense, the FloodNet performance was able to facilitate a symbolic return of the dead to the servers of those responsible for their murders.

## FloodNet Philosophy

"Only art history still knows that the famed geniuses of the Renaissance did not just create paintings and buildings, but calculated fortresses and constructed war machines. If the phantasm of all Information Warfare, to reduce war to software and its forms of death to operating system crashes, were to come true, lonesome hackers would take the place of the historic artist-engineers."

Frederich Kittler

<http://www.aec.at/infowar/NETSYMPOSIUM/ARCH-EN/msg00001.html>

Taking the place of "historic artist-engineers" only becomes possible if we focus on genius as a emergent quality of human-machinic networks (the cybernetic as distributed collective). "Lonesome hackers", is somewhat misleading in the context of fine artists working on software weapons, if only because it unfortunately indexes all of modernism's notions of troubled genius, without qualifying it in the context of the conflation of biological life into the consciousness prosthetic of the network. The Zaps FloodNet hopefully serves as a counter example to this notion of individualist genius, because, as media art, it has emerged from and serves a community which genuinely requires the development of such attention weapons as a matter survival.

As an alternative to the re-emergence of the artist as the lonely hacker, we

could in turn seek an ontological status for artist as "true" defensive worker in the network era. But the destructive implementation of "Defense" as euphemism for war (as in the name change in the United States from the "Department of War" to the "Department of Defense"), long ago erased the distinction between defensive and offensive capabilities once evident in the various designs of fortresses and war machines. The cryptanalytical foundation secrecy, correctly identified as the foundation of contemporary information processes, is simultaneously defensive and offensive under this implosion. Can the fortress be reinstantiated?

It seems that the reconstruction of the fortress as a somehow useful strategy is no less misguided and romantic than the reinstantiation of the Renaissance artist figure as a cryptanalytical war engineer. If anything, the cryptanalytical accomplishments of the past two centuries have soundly defeated the wall as a defensive mechanism; not only by blurring the distinction between defense and offence (as in Ronald Reagan's star wars imaginary), but by simply rendering walls and other manifestations of protection useless.

As such, fortifications and secrecy are a kind of trap for information artists for many reasons. Information is ephemeral, becoming stale quickly, leaving it as one of the most perishable of tactical tools. Additionally, most artists do not have the capital to compete with the information warfare apparatus of corporations and governments. And of course, no one really cares about an artist's secrets in any case! It is better to not have secrets, because to do so is to pretend walls of comfort around us which no longer exist. More importantly, it reduces the amount of friction the info-artist must face: secrecy requires little work if we are little concerned with it. It is better to take public actions which call attention to dangerous situations for real people. Artists as communications engineers, working in groups to design the next generation of networked communications pulse-weapon, will allow still larger groups to leverage their numbers in tactical performances of presence; these are the goals of non-violent inforwar.

The Zaps FloodNet represents just such a collective weapon of presence. Designed as a collectively actuated weapon, inverting the logic of wide open propaganda pipes by flooding network connections with millions of hits from widely distributed, fully participatory nodes, the FloodNet enables a performance of presence which says to Mexico (and its close ally the United States): "We are numerous, alert, and watching carefully." After the initial design, the roles played by communications artists are best described as



only  
the initial low-dimensional attractors upon which the critical tertiary  
projection of similarity in the dynamic net-system of cybernetics is  
articulated. This is not only evident in user participation with the FloodNet  
performances, but in other similarly directed mass actions. Instead of the  
return of the Renaissance artist/engineer or the sedentary seclusion of the  
fortress, we seek instead the self-organization of human-machinic networks  
of  
good conscious, visibility, and presence.

Ricardo Dominguez- Organizer, Agitator, Artist, Theorist  
(<http://www.thing.net/~rdom>)

Carmin Karasic- Artist, Interface design and testing, Graphic Design  
(<http://www.pixelyze.com/users/carmin>)

Brett Stalbaum- Java Programmer, Artist and author of FloodNet Applet  
(<http://cadre.sjsu.edu/beestal>)

Stefan Wray- Theorist, Writer, and Agitator  
(<http://www.nyu.edu/projects/wray>)

Information on actions:  
(<http://www.nyu.edu/projects/wray/ecd.html>)

To actually instantiate the software and engage a target:  
(<http://www.thing.net/~rdom/zapsTactical/foyer2.htm>)



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### Submissions

Send comments, ideas, texts, and links to [Stefan Wray](#) and [Ricardo Dominguez](#)

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### Join the ECD distribution list

*send a message to:*

[listproc@listproc.thing.net](mailto:listproc@listproc.thing.net)

*in the body of the message:*

subscribe ecd Firstname Lastname

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### About Us

[The Electronic Disturbance Theater and Electronic Civil Disobedience](#)

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### Our Web Sites

[Ricardo Dominguez](#)

[Carmin Karasic](#)

[Paco Nathan](#)

[Brett Stalbaum](#)

[Stefan Wray](#)





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**Fall Campaign**

[September 9](#)

[September 16](#)

[October 4 & 5](#)

[October 12](#)

[November 22](#)

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**Action Calendar**

[1998 Tactical Theater Schedule](#)

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**FloodNet Archive**

[August 7](#)

[July 19](#)

[July 3](#)

[June 28](#)

[June 10](#)

[May 10](#)

[April 10](#)   [Audio Report](#)   [Protest Report](#)   [ECD Report](#)

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**Other Actors**

[Support British Anti-Nuclear Hacker](#)

[Hack Into Mexican Government Web Site](#)

[Anonymous Digital Coalition's Call for a Virtual Sit In](#)



# September 9



On September 9 FloodNet will target the web sites of Mexican President Zedillo, The Pentagon, and the Frankfurt Stock Exchange. This takes place in connection with the Electronic Disturbance Theater's SWARM participation in the Ars Electronica Festival on Infowar in Linz, Austria, from September 7 to 12. Others are urged to join our action or make their own.

## ELECTRONIC DISTURBANCE THEATER BULLETIN

Advance News Release

Tuesday, August 25, 1998

TELL THE WORLD: STOP THE WAR IN MEXICO  
NETSTRIKE AGAINST GOVERNMENT, MILITARY, AND  
FINANCIAL  
WEB SITES IN MEXICO, THE UNITED STATES, AND  
GERMANY

CALL FOR FLOODNET ACTIONS (SWARM) ON SEPTEMBER 9  
AGAINST PRESIDENT ZEDILLO, PENTAGON, AND  
FRANKFURT STOCK EXCHANGE

FALL CAMPAIGN ON THE STREET AND THE NET  
REAL AND VIRTUAL TOGETHER

In solidarity with the Zapatistas, indigenous peoples in Chiapas, others resisting the Mexican government, the global pro-Zapatista movement, and people everywhere struggling against neoliberalism and the global economy, the Electronic Disturbance Theater urges SWARM actions, multiple acts of Electronic Civil Disobedience, on Wednesday, September 9, 1998.  
(<http://www.nyu.edu/projects/wray/ecd.html>)

To demonstrate our capacity for simultaneous global electronic actions and to emphasize the multiple nature of our opponents, FloodNet will target three web sites in Mexico, the United States, and Europe representing three important sectors: government, military,

and financial.

In Mexico, FloodNet will target President Zedillo's web site, (<http://www.presidencia.gob.mx/>) an obvious choice and one we have made before. In the United States, FloodNet will target the Pentagon, (<http://www.defenselink.mil/>) also an obvious choice given the level of U.S. military and intelligence involvement in Mexico. And in Germany, FloodNet will target the Frankfurt Stock Exchange, (<http://www.exchange.de/>) a less obvious choice, but one that makes sense as it is a key European financial site with high symbolic value and as Germany is a major player in the global neoliberal economy.

The Electronic Disturbance Theater calls these electronic actions in conjunction with its participation in the Ars Electronica Festival on Infowar, held in Linz, Austria, from September 7 to 12. (<http://web.aec.at/infowar/>) We urge people to join our actions and we urge people to engage in their own actions at the same time as ours.

We urge multiple actions, virtual and real, on multiple levels, aimed at multiple targets, from multiple sources, both on September 9, but also for a series of dates scheduled for this fall. We call for hybrid street/Net actions on September 16, October 12, and November 22.

September 16 is Mexican Independence Day. The Mexico Solidarity Network in North America has called for a month-long series of activities starting on this day and ending on October 12, Columbus Day in the United States. The North East Zapatista Solidarity Network has called for actions on October 12. And in New York, on Oct. 12, the New York Zapatistas are planning a Festival of Resistance that includes a march to the United Nations. As happened last year, this November 22 there will be another civil disobedience action at the School of the Americas, a good opportunity for a joint civil disobedience - electronic civil disobedience action.

Stay tuned to the Electronic Civil Disobedience page for details of Sept. 9, Sept. 16, Oct. 12, Nov. 22, and other actions this fall.

- The Electronic Disturbance Theater



# September 16



## Mexican Independence Day

The Mexico Solidary Network in North America has called for a month long series of activity beginning on September 16, Mexican Independence Day, and ending on October 12, Columbus Day (in the United States).

The Electronic Disturbance Theater, as part of its proposal for hybrid actions this fall, calls for ECD actions using FloodNet and other software on both September 16 and October 12.

More details coming soon. . .



# October 12



## **Columbus Day**

October 12, 1998

## **FLOODNET AGAINST ZEDILLO'S WEB SITE...AGAIN!**

**10 am - 4 pm (NY Time)**

## **JOIN NOW!**

The New York Zapatistas, a NYC Zapatista solidarity group, is preparing for a Festival of Resistance on October 12, Columbus Day, that includes a demonstration and march from Columbus Circle to the United Nations. Regional protests on October 12 were called for by a gathering of the North East Zapatista Solidarity Network in April.

The Mexico Solidarity Network's month-long series of activity begins on September 16 and ends on October 12, so the New York Festival of Resistance will be part of internationally coordinated action on this day.

As part of its fall campaign the Electronic Disturbance Theater calls for Electronic Civil Disobedience actions on Columbus Day. (More details later)

The New York Zapatistas are hosting a Festival of Resistance on Oct. 12, 1998, Columbus day, also known as Dia de la Raza. We propose a day of celebration by individuals and groups who want to meet and learn about the innumerable ways in which people are resisting the growing repression of "globalization"

Los NY Zapatistas presentan un Festival Cultural de Resistencia en apoyopueblos Indigenas y grupos y organizaaciones en la lucha el 12 de Octubrede 1998, reconocido como el Dia De La Raza o de Cristobal Colon. Proponemos un dia de celebracion con grupos o individuos que deseanreunirse y

and neoliberal policies.

The theme of the day is Resistance. In the morning we will march from Columbus circle to the UN to voice our concerns about human rights violations in Mexico and around the world. In the afternoon and evening, people will gather at the Theatre For The New City, to participate in events ranging from poetry, theatre, dance, music, videos, photography, speakers, and political discussions.

We invite individuals and groups to join us in this celebration, either as spectators in solidarity, or as participants disseminating information about your particular struggle, or performing or showing videos, photos about subjects relevant to your cause.

This event is a chance to meet other people and organizations, and an opportunity to spread info about your particular struggle, and also a way for us to gather together and recognize our united strength.

For info on how to participate:  
Tel: 212 561-0302  
email:  
[102622.2034@compuserve.com](mailto:102622.2034@compuserve.com)

PO box 157 Cooper Station, NY,  
NY

obtener informacion de los diferentes modos en que estamos luchando y resistiendo contra la represion de la creciente neoliberalismo.

El tema de esta celebracion es: La Resistencia. Protestamos la creciente globalizacion, explotacion y genocidio con raices en la invasion de las Americas. Por la manana marcharemos a las Naciones Unidas para dar voz a nuestras preocupaciones sobre las violaciones a los derechos humanos en el mundo entero. Por la tarde nos reunimos en el Theatre For The New City, a disfrutar de poesia, danza, teatro, musica, fotografia, video y discursos politicos con oradores invitados.

Les invitamos a participar el 12 de Octubre en esta Celebracion de Resistencia, compartiendo informacion sobre su lucha particular y los diferentes modos de combatir la opresion. Pero mas importante el reconocimiento de nuestra fuerza unida.

Para mas informacion:  
tel: (212) 561-0302  
email:  
[102622.2034@compuseve.com](mailto:102622.2034@compuseve.com)  
P.O. Box 157 Cooper Station,  
NYC, NY.





# November 22

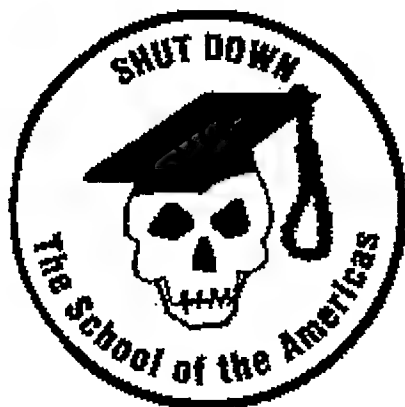


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## School of the Americas Day of Action

As part of a long term campaign against the School of the Americas, otherwise known as the "School of the Assassins" there will be Civil Disobedience action at the school again this November organized by [School of the Americas Watch](#). In the 1990s the School of the Americas' role in training the Mexican military has increased dramatically, especially since the January 1, 1994 Zapatista uprising.

The Electronic Disturbance Theater calls for Electronic Civil Disobedience to join the Civil Disobedience campaign aimed at the School of the Americas on November 22 between Noon and 5 p.m. EST (New York Time). Details will appear later this fall.



[School of the Americas](#)  
[Watch](#)  
[November 22 CD Vigil](#)



# Stop The War In Mexico

## Electronic Civil Disobedience

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A Production of The Electronic Disturbance Theater

Show times for The Dress Rehearsal and Each Act:

10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. and 4:00 to 6:00 p.m. each date

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The Dress Rehearsal: April 10, Friday



Act One: May 10, Sunday



Act Two: Scene One June 10, Wednesday



Act Two: Scene Two: June 28, Sunday

Massacre

Act Three: July 6, Monday

CHANGED TO JULY 3



Act Four: August 8, Saturday



**Act Five: Scene One: September 16, Wednesday**

■  
■

**Act Five: Scene Two: October 2, Friday**

Massacre

**Act Six: October 12, Monday**

■

**Act Seven: Scene One: November 17, Tuesday**

■

■ **Act Seven: Scene Two: November 22, Sunday**

■

**Act Eight: December 22, Tuesday**

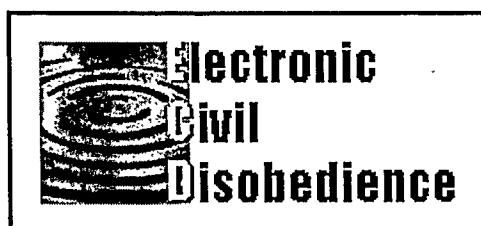
■

**Act Nine: January 1, 1999, Friday**

■

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**Electronic Civil Disobedience Homepage**



This August the 7th we will  
celebrate  
Emiliano Zapata Birthday  
a Virtual Action against President  
Zedillo's site.  
ON, AUGUST THE 7TH:

FROM 10:00 AM TO 4:00 PM  
(MEXICO CITY TIME)

FROM 4:00 PM TO 10:00 PM  
(GMT- GREENWICH MEAN TIME)

## JOIN THE ACTION NOW

"We invite all sisters and brothers of good heart to join in celebration.

(Yes we know that his Birthday is the 8th of August. We feel more people can participate on the 7th of August).

**Zapata VIVE!!!**

\*\*\*\*\*

### **Communique from Subcomander Marcos (Part 5)**

#### **Masks and The Silence from Above:**

"I have heard much of your cosmetics: God has given you one face, and you make another; you prance, you show your hips, you mispronounce, you give nicknames to God's creature, and you make of your ignorance your lasciviousness."

"Hamlet," William Shakespeare

What is the government's role in society? What should its role be? These questions are asked by the politicians, the analysts and by society. There are many responses to one and the other question, but the Mexican government has their own and, despite the madness of the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse - Zedillo, Labastida, Greco, Madrazo, Gurria, Ortiz, Rabasa and Albores (yes, I know already that I gave 8, but 4 are horsemen and 4 are you choose) - they impose them with blood (contributed by those from below) and fire (from those above).

Lacking the legitimacy which can only be obtained by the governed, these characters from the Mexican tradition of the end of the century, supplant it with a mask made 'ex profeso,' that of the State of Law. In the name of the Rule of Law" they impose economic measures, they assassinate, they imprison, they rape, they destroy, they perpetrate war.

Without rational arguments, without legitimacy, without morals, the government of Mexico seizes its only weapon: violence. But the government does not direct this violence against organized crime or against delinquency; it does not use it against itself, it is used against the most impoverished, that is, a now immense majority, but it continues growing at the same rhythm as the country is collapsing.

It could seem to us that a collapse could have a thunderous sound, but, in this case, a silence covers it and announces it, the silence of the forgetting.

In order to supplant its lack of legitimacy with legality, the Mexican State (and not just the government) mounts a complex surgical operation on the entire social order. That is, to eradicate the historical memory from governed. And they try to do this by substituting the true history (in lower case), with the Official History (in upper case). And this Official History is not learned in books, rather it was created in the mental laboratories of postgraduates in foreign universities. Harvard, Oxford, Yale, and the MIT are the modern "Founding Fathers" of the current Mexican leaders. And so the Official History comes from as far away as the indicators of economic crisis, these have the constancy of a weather vane in the middle of a storm. And so the present is the only possible future for these "blackboard boys" (as Carlos Fuentes would name them), the "computer kids" (as who-knows-what would name them), or the "Pines Cartel" (as their drug trafficking associates call them). If constancy and hard work are characteristic of the history of those from below, the ephemeral is the preferred place for the Official History. The "Today" of the stock markets is the historical reference of these technocrats who, thanks to the criminal Carlos Salinas de Gortari, today find themselves in political power in Mexico. This Official History is a mask.

The Mask of "Modernity." Does it seem attractive? Functional? Aerodynamic? Biodegradable? Cool? Like nothing of that, but it is sold and consumed with similar arguments. The Modernity of the neoliberal leader in Mexico reveals an empty and dry country. In spite of publicity and marketing techniques, and notwithstanding millions spent in cosmetics and makeup, the mask of Mexican Modernity is being more and more chipped away. And it is more and more difficult to not see what it is hiding: the destruction of the nurturing bases of the Mexican State, that is, the bases of National Sovereignty.

With 'modernity' as a spinal column, a series of arguments (mask's beyond a doubt) are wielded to justify the double meaning of "making justice" and "giving a reason for being") the dramatic destruction of all that which allows a country to keep its "national sovereignty" from being a mere rhetorical device. Ownership of subsistence, wealth, of the territorial waters and air, of the lines of communication, of the businesses with social functions (education, health, food, housing, security), social policy, effective control of financial and commercial markets, money, language, government, armed forces, history, these are some of the foundations necessary for a State. Through various means, and behind several masks, but always with the same urgency, these bases of national sovereignty are being weakened, when they are not outright destroyed, by the neoliberal governments of Mexico: Miguel Alemán, Carlos Salinas de Gortari and (the student surpasses his teachers) Ernesto Zedillo Ponce de León.

With the masks of "industrial restructuring," "adaptation to the modern era of globalization," the "streamlining of public spending," the "elimination of subsidies which hinder free trade and economic development," "the international fight against drug trafficking," and "the end of the populist State," the Mexican governments since 1982 until the present have operated a veritable extermination campaign against the fundamental supports of national sovereignty.

Selling off state enterprises for a song, giving in to the pressures of international markets, abandoning their service functions (or changing their function into the buying of votes), ending supports for basic products and controlling salaries, leaving the future of the national currency to the discretion of large financial centers, leaving their governmental activities to the publicity campaigns which the sales market of countries demands, away from national armed forces the role of neighborhood policemen in the global village, rewriting (and erasing) national history, thinking in dollars, all in all, the last Mexican governments have managed, through various means, to leave this country less and less ours, and less and less a country.

Pay attention. What remains of the Mexican State to allow it to claim that it is sovereign? Hundreds of state

enterprises have been sold, the pompously named "Mexican Stock Exchange" looks like a branch of the As markets (and those who peddle the idea that it may be a branch indeed, but it's a branch of the North Amer Exchanges), the only consistency in the price of basic products is their upward mobility, the Mexican peso language in the international currency market, the Mexican governments think in English and only translate Spanish when they are directing themselves to nationals (although not with any luck, as Chancellor Green demonstrated), the Mexican federal army carries out (under orders from North American advisors) in the mountains the same work which General Custer did with the indigenous in the United States, and high officials of the Mexican government respond swiftly and with certainty to the question: "When is Independence Day?" conclusively, "the fourth of July." Scandalous? Right, but for this we reach for the Forgetting. Another silence.

Yes, forget what we were, what brought us to here. Forget all the past, not just that of Deception and pain, and above all, that of struggle and rebellion. But the peculiarity of that forgetting is that it doesn't try to erase what came before, but rather to condemn it, being ashamed of it, regretting it. As is evident, all attempts to "bring the past into the present" is subversion of the "peace and tranquility," it is illegal, ultimately something to be concealed. There you have, for example, those Indians who "bring" Zapata to these times of modern globalization and have him speak and make history. And (what a scandal!) even on the Internet that terrorist cry of Zapata Vive can be heard. Subversion, even to speak. How well off we were with that Zapata in his grave, in the museum, in a book that was never opened! Therefore, those who "bring" Zapata are illegal and subversive, that Zapata is illegal and subversive because of the nightmares he provokes, and, ergo, history is illegal and subversive - not just because it questions today, but also because it makes one believe (and struggle for!) that another today is possible. To conceal this silence, another mask.....

The Mask of the Macroeconomy...and we say to that Mask...Zapata Vive y Vive!!

Communique from Subcomander Marcos (Part 5)

(You can find all the 5 parts of the Communique on the InfoWar Thread at: <http://www.thing.net/> )

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## **Zapatistas choose words over arms in Chiapas fight**

By Laurence Iliff

EL BOSQUE, Chiapas -- For four months, the Mexican government has used battalions of soldiers, police judges to crack down on Chiapas communities that sympathize with Zapatista rebels.

The Zapatista leadership, in turn, has resorted to powerful weapons of its own: humor, poetry and an appeal to the Mexican people. And, analysts said, their strategy seems to be working, even as the government pours millions of dollars into the poor state.

Last week, President Ernesto Zedillo visited Chiapas for the sixth time this year. From an orange grove in the Lacandon jungle, Zedillo promised agricultural subsidies to raise living standards. And in the urban center of San Cristobal de las Casas, Zedillo handed out thousands of dollars in checks to communities to help market their handicraft projects and reiterated his administration's stance of seeking a political solution to the conflict.

What 4.5 years ago was a brief fight between the ragtag Zapatista Army of National Liberation, or EZLN, and Mexico's powerful army has become a political standoff in which the rebels have established 32 "autonomous" towns locally and garnered widespread political support nationally and internationally.

"It's like the government woke up one day and realized it was a hostage of the Zapatistas," said Luis Hernandez Navarro, a newspaper columnist and an adviser to a congressional peace commission. "It cannot start an all-out war."

because the political costs would be too high. And it cannot make peace because it has already gone back on promises. It is in the worst possible situation."

Or as rebel sympathizer Ventura Morales, 50, said after eight comrades were killed by police and Army troops in Bosque last month: "The blows we receive from the government only make us stronger. Now, there are more Zapatistas than ever and they are madder than ever."

What Former Foreign Minister Jose Angel Gurría once called a war "of ink and the Internet" in reference to the Zapatistas' impressive media machine, now consumes the activities of at least 30,000 troops and can still rattle the nation's delicate financial markets.

The first "post-Cold War" guerrillas, as historian Lorenzo Meyer calls the Zapatistas, have blossomed without having to fight or lay down their arms. Bloodbaths against peasant rebels, like those in El Salvador or Guatemala in the 1980s, are frowned upon by a world community no longer divided by East and West.

Zedillo's latest attempt to force the Zapatistas back to the negotiating table has resulted in a rebel challenge to the government to hold a national plebiscite on an Indian rights accord. Mexican authorities first signed an accord in 1996 and then rejected it.

Subcomandante Marcos, the charismatic Zapatista leader, also compared himself to Speedy Gonzalez, the 1990s mouse cartoon character who runs circles around his stronger opponents. And the Zapatistas began their latest message to Mexico's Indian people with poetry expressing dignity and solidarity among all indigenous people in their fight for greater rights.

To be sure, the Mexican government continues to have a near-monopoly on military power in Chiapas and has won an open confrontation with the Zapatistas, said observers, who do not rule that out, despite the potential political costs. And denied government funds, Zapatista communities are squeezed to the limit. They often rely on "caravans" of food and clothing brought by Mexican and foreign sympathizers.

The secretary general of the United Nations, Kofi Annan, gently chided the Zapatistas during a visit to Mexico on Wednesday and Thursday, rejecting their call for the United Nations' involvement in the conflict and saying his message to the rebels would be: "It takes two to tango."

Despite the U.N.'s rejection of their appeal, analysts said the real fight continues to be for the hearts and minds of the people in Chiapas, throughout Mexico and around the world.

"If the strategy is to isolate the EZLN and its sympathizers, it won't work," said Primitivo Rodriguez, a political consultant who has worked for the government and the political opposition. "The problem is that if it proceeds to a clear, open public renewal of hostilities, it won't be fighting the Zapatistas. It will be fighting Indian people for their right for self-determination."

That, more than anything, analysts said, is what sets the Zapatistas apart from any other rebel movements in Mexico and around the world.

Early on, by naming themselves in memory of Mexican Revolutionary hero Emiliano Zapata, the Zapatistas established themselves as an indigenous rights movement rather than a Marxist or Maoist one like their counterparts in Latin America in decades past, observers said.

And unlike isolated Indian uprisings in Mexico over the past five centuries, the Zapatistas have linked various Chiapas communities and different ethnic groups.

The movement was then glamorized through figures such as Subcomandante Marcos, who -- with his ski pipe and penchant for being photographed on horseback -- became something of a sex symbol and an international icon. Marcos, who is white, was complimented by indigenous Zapatista leaders like "Tacho" and "Ramon" who wear traditional Mayan clothing.

And the Zapatistas have never been associated with blowing up bridges or terrorist attacks, enabling a broad spectrum of prominent national and international figures to embrace them.

"This is not a clandestine rebel operation where people are afraid to say publicly that they belong to the rebellion," Rodriguez said. "These people are happy and proud to say that they are Zapatistas."

Zedillo, after permissively allowing Zapatista towns to take hold in the Chiapas countryside, has now exchanged the carrot for the stick, trying to force the rebels into a settlement before the 2000 presidential balloting, in which conflict is sure to be a major issue, analysts said.

In his two visits to Chiapas this month, Zedillo denied that the government was preparing for a war and laid blame for the breakdown of peace talks in late 1996 on the rebels and on the former peace negotiator, Catholic Bishop Samuel Ruiz. The clergyman resigned his peace negotiator position in June after the government accused him of being partial to the EZLN.

"If everyone is in favor of a dialogue, then there are no more excuses," Zedillo said Thursday during his tour of Chiapas. "In Chiapas, there has not been nor will there be war between Mexicans."

Nevertheless, the last seven months have been marked by conflict. In December, 45 Zapatista sympathizers were killed by paramilitary groups. Four communities have been broken up since April, including the town of El Bosque, where eight civilians and two police officers died in a clash between state forces and rebel sympathizers.

Zedillo blamed violence in Chiapas on the Zapatistas, accusing them of taking over pro-government communities by force. The Zapatistas have moved forward to establish governments based on Mayan customs and vowed to give them up.

Zedillo has tried to undercut rebel support through public works projects, education programs and farm subsidies. Chiapas, with a population of 3.6 million people, has received more federal aid than any other state during the current administration.

In the past three years, for example, the government has spent \$90 million to buy and redistribute land in Chiapas. This year alone, the government will spend \$90 million in agricultural subsidies in the state.

"Unfortunately, there are indigenous, peasant communities where conditions are getting worse," Zedillo said Thursday during his tour of Chiapas. "It is precisely in communities where there are conflicts that conditions are getting worse."

For example, poor Indians who leave the ranks of the Zapatista rebels said they can look forward to food, agricultural credits for coffee crops, and perhaps a haircut in one of the Mexican Army's "social labor" camps.

But there aren't any takers so far in the "autonomous" Zapatista community of Polho, where unarmed Indian women and children in white-and-red embroidered shirts form a human chain to keep out soldiers and police. Residents said they'd rather starve, which many of them appear close to, than give up their fight.

"The government can beat us, torture us and even kill our comrades, but the Zapatistas will only grow," said Roberto Arias, 34, a Mayan Indian peasant clad in a torn Bugs Bunny shirt and worn boots with no laces.



``We've always lived in misery, but before the Zapatistas, we were dogs," he said. ``Now we are men."

(c) 1998, The Dallas Morning News.

\*\*\*\*\*

Also a new essay can be found on the The Electronic Disturbance Theater site:

**\*Paris Salon or Boston Tea Party  
Recasting Electronic Democracy,  
A View from Amsterdam\***  
by Stefan Wray

TEA PARTY

\*\*\*\*\*

Send feedback to

Ricardo Dominguez, [rdom@thing.net](mailto:rdom@thing.net),  
and Stefan Wray, [sjw210@is8.nyu.edu](mailto:sjw210@is8.nyu.edu)

Join the AUGUST 7TH ECD action.

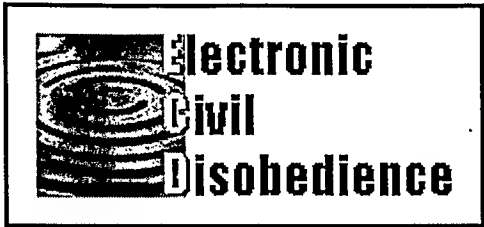
Thank you for joining us. Return for our next action on Act Five: Scene One: September 16, Wednesday N.  
Independence Day

TACTICAL THEATER

The Electronic Disturbance Theater

- Ricardo Dominguez
- Carmin Karasic
- Brett Stalbaum
- Stefan Wray

HOME



*EMERGENCY WWW OF  
ELECTRONIC CIVIL  
DISOBEDIENCE  
AGAINST ZEDILLO  
STARTS JUNE 19, AT NOON  
(Washington DC Time)*

**"Now, he blames  
the Zapatistas and  
very aggressively  
threatens mass  
extermination."**

- Boston report of Mex. Consul visit  
(6/16)



**Acteal in  
December,  
and now El Bosque  
in June. When will  
the violence end?**

**Join a virtual sit-in on the Zedillo web site.**

*Activate FloodNet Now!*

**\*Important: First turn Java Script OFF on your browser**

<Enter here to turn OFF JavaScript>  
<http://cadre.sjsu.edu/beestal/zapsTactical/javascrp.htm>

<Enter here if JavaScript already turned OFF>  
<http://www.thing.net/~rdom/zapsTactical/zaps.html>

***Set your browser to FloodNet and let it run!***

- [What happened at El Bosque?](#)
- [The Electronic Disturbance Theater and Electronic Civil Disobedience](#)
- [Zapatista Resources in Cyberspace](#)



April 10  
Zedillo Web  
Site

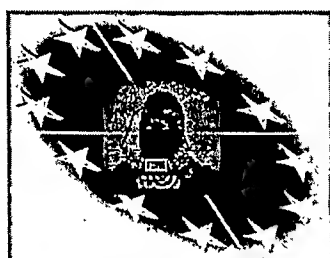


May 10  
Clinton Web Site



June 10  
Gobernacion Web  
Site

# STOP THE WAR IN MEXICO!!!



Join a virtual sit-in on the Mexican Embassy web site in England. Enter FloodNet.



**Details about the Electronic Disturbance Theater and Electronic Civil Disobedience.**

**Previous actions: April 10, May 10, June 10, June 19, and June 28.**



**Next ECD action on August 8, Emiliano Zapata's birthday.**

## July 3 European ECD Action

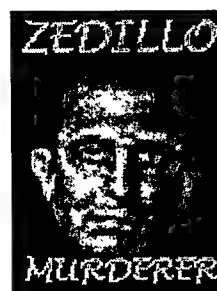


**10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.**

**Mexico City Time**

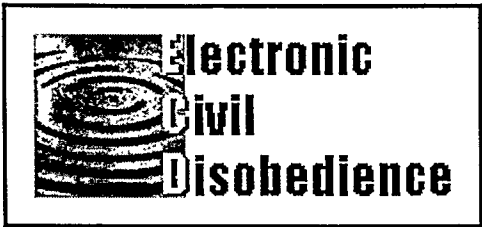
**4:00 to 10:00 p.m.**

**Greenwich Mean Time (GMT)**



**Send email to President Zedillo or use the automailer.**

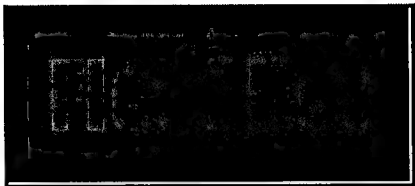
**Get ready for swarm actions. Read our SWARM proposal to the Ars Electronica fesitival in Linz, Austria, September 7 to 12.**



**On June 28 join a virtual  
sit-in on Secretaria de  
Gobernacion's web site**

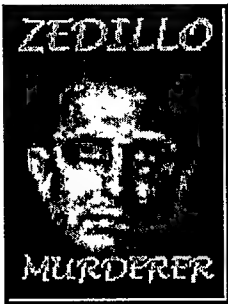
*Set your browser to FloodNet and let it run!*

**10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.  
Mexico City Time  
4:00 to 10:00 p.m.  
Greenwich Mean Time  
(GMT)**



**"Now, he blames  
the Zapatistas and  
very aggressively  
threatens mass  
extermination."**

**- Boston report of Mex. Consul visit  
(6/16)**



**Aguas Blancas on  
June 28, 1995.  
Acteal in  
December, 1997,  
and now El Bosque  
in June. When will  
the violence end?**

**On June 28, 1995, State police in Guerrero ambushed members of the  
Southern Sierra Peasant Organization (OCSS) near Aguas Blancas,  
Guerrero, killing 17.**

**ALSO SEND EMAIL TO PRESIDENT ZEDILLO**

**OR USE THE AUTOMAIL SYSTEM**

**RETURN ON JULY 3 FOR A EUROPEAN ACTION**



April 10  
Zedillo Web  
Site



May 10  
Clinton Web Site



Electronic  
Civil  
Disobedience

June 10  
Gobernacion Web  
Site



June 19  
Zedillo Web  
Site

**The Electronic Disturbance  
Theater  
and Electronic Civil Disobedience**  
A paper presented at Fringeware and the Grassroots  
News Network and Cultural Jam in Austin, Texas



**World Wide Web of  
Electronic Civil Disobedience  
to Stop the War in Mexico**

**ZAPATISTA FLOODNETS NOW ACTIVE**

The Electronic Disturbance Theater announces its next location for Electronic Civil Disobedience to Stop the War in Mexico will be a web site and email address in Mexico. The group plans on June 10, to target a site in Mexico to protest the expulsion of international human rights organizations from Chiapas and the implementation of restrictions on internationals who wish to enter the country.

**ZAPATISTA FLOODNETS NOW ACTIVE**

**URL's NOW CLOSED**

The Electronic Civil Disobedience will take place between:

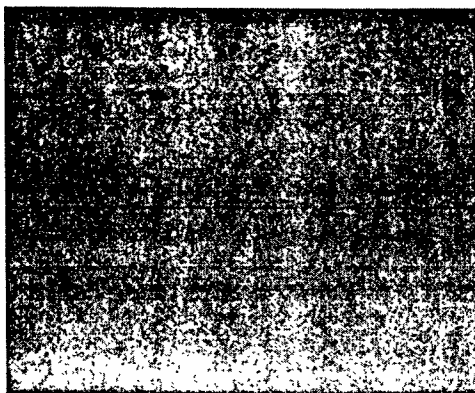
(11a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Eastern Standard Time)

(10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Mexico City Time)

(4:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. Greenwich Mean Time)

**ALSO SEND EMAIL TO PRESIDENT ZEDILLO**

**JUNE 10  
FLOOD NET  
ACTION**



[webadmon@op.presidencia.gob.mx](mailto:webadmon@op.presidencia.gob.mx)

OR USE THE AUTOMAIL SYSTEM:

<http://www.newhumans.com/chiapas/auto>

Thank You.



*May 10*

*World Wide Web  
of*



*Stop The War  
In Mexico*

*ZEDILLO*

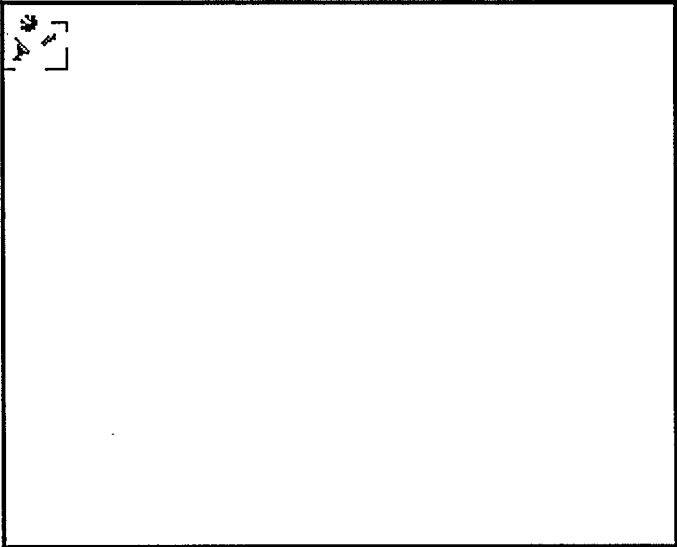


*MURDERER*

# **Why target the White House**

# **How to flood the White House**

*The  
Electronic  
Disturbance  
Theater  
Presents  
World Wide  
Web of  
Electronic  
Civil  
Disobedience  
To Stop the  
War in  
Mexico*



**ON MOTHER'S DAY, MAY 10,  
JOIN THE ONGOING VIRTUAL SIT-IN,  
AGAINST THE WAR IN MEXICO,  
FLOOD THE WHITE HOUSE WEB SITE!**

**WITH A FINAL RALLY ON MAY 11  
(From 10 am to 11 am Mexico City Time)  
(11 am to 12 noon Eastern Standard Time)**

*1998 Tactical Theater Schedule*  
*Electronic Civil Disobedience*  
*Zapatistas in Cyberspace*

*A project of the Electronic Disturbance Theater*  
*Page Updated May 9, 1998*

# RED ALERT

Flood Net: Version 1.0 Deactivated

1998 Tactical Theater Schedule

On April 10, 1998,  
participate in global  
electronic civil  
disobedience actions to  
protest the Mexican  
government's escalating  
war against the  
Zapatistas and other  
indigenous people in  
Chiapas.



**READ LEGAL WARNING BEFORE CONTINUING**

**On April 10, 1998**

**NY Zapatistas Urge Electronic Civil Disobedience**

**NCDM Call for April 10 and May 10**

**Zapatista Resources in Cyberspace**

**Act During Two Time Periods**

10:00 am to 12:00 pm

and

4:00 pm to 6:00 pm

MEXICO CITY TIME

**Your Local Time**

**Time Zone Web Site**

**Focus On Four Sites**

Zedillo Administration

Clinton White House

Mexican Stock Exchange (Bolsa)

Chase Manhattan Bank

**URLS and Email Addresses**

**Use Your Imagination**



**Flood Net: Version 1.0 Deactivated**

**Other Possibilities**

**This Is Just The Dress Rehearsal**

**For May 10**

**1998 Tactical Theater Schedule**

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**Electronic Civil Disobedience Homepage**

# **File Not Found**

The requested URL /projects/wray/LegalWarning.html was not found on this server.

# File Not Found

The requested URL /projects/wray/sitesdirs.html was not found on this server.

## Brief Report of New York April 10 Demonstrations for Chiapas

by Stefan Wray, April 11, 1998

**New York (April 10)**--An afternoon vigil in front of the NYC Mexican Consulate drew several people who distributed leaflets to people passing by. Between 5:00 and 6:00 p.m. there was a rally of about 30 people including members of New York Zapatistas, members of the Westchester Zapatista Solidarity Group, students from Yale, Columbia, and NYU. A modified version of the Stations of the Cross was performed - given that it was Good Friday - and excerpts from a letter written by Zapata were read. As many are well aware, the Consulate was closed today. It was also closed on April 9. So in some ways our message was falling upon deaf ears. To compensate, though, we did get good media coverage. The Spanish cable version of CBS came as did a photographer from Newsday, a Long Island based newspaper.

At 7:00 p.m. many from the consulate went downtown to the Federal building to join a Stations of the Cross protest in response to recent INS raids and rounding up of undocumented workers. Several people captured in last week's raid had participated in New York Zapatista meetings and activities. At the Federal building, INS headquarters, there were at least 200 people, the vast majority (95%?) were from New York's Mexican communities. This event, which was well covered by the media, including international Spanish language television like ECO, was pulled together in less than a week by the Asociacion Tepeyac de New York and several from NY Zapatistas. At each Station of the Cross a statement was read. Throughout there were links made between low intensity war in Chiapas, INS raids and roundups in New York, and how they are situated in neoliberalism, neocolonialism, and globalization. The first paragraph of the first station read as follows:

"Los que gobiernan este mundo imponen el llamado Neoliberalismo, Nuevo Colonialismo, o Globalizacion dondequiera. NAFTA o el tratado de libre comercio con Mexico es una de sus concreciones."

The beta actions of Electronic Civil Disobedience had mixed reviews, both in face-to-face reaction and on-line reports. The actions also had mixed results. The strongest critique of Electronic Civil Disobedience revolved around the meaning of "civil disobedience." Others were less concerned with the literal meaning of these words and enjoyed some of the features on the April 10 web site. There were mixed reports about the impact. Remember this was an experiment, a test, a dress rehearsal. Part of the experiment was to see if people all around the world can act at the same time on the Net. This seems to be the case. Yesterday, when some tried to access the web site of Zedillo, they could not. But when others tried, they were able to. It seems that numerous people were tuned in to Flood Net: Version 1.0. Probably at certain points during the day a critical mass was reached at which points access to Zedillo's web page were temporarily cut off.

Please send both positive and negative critical reaction to what appeared on the April10.html web page, the dress rehearsal of The Electronic Disturbance Theater, to <mailto:sjw210@is8.nyu.edu> and to <mailto:rdom@thing.net>

ECD Homepage

## Brief Report of New York April 10 Demonstrations for Chiapas

by Stefan Wray, April 11, 1998

**New York (April 10)**--An afternoon vigil in front of the NYC Mexican Consulate drew several people who distributed leaflets to people passing by. Between 5:00 and 6:00 p.m. there was a rally of about 30 people including members of New York Zapatistas, members of the Westchester Zapatista Solidarity Group, students from Yale, Columbia, and NYU. A modified version of the Stations of the Cross was performed - given that it was Good Friday - and excerpts from a letter written by Zapata were read. As many are well aware, the Consulate was closed today. It was also closed on April 9. So in some ways our message was falling upon deaf ears. To compensate, though, we did get good media coverage. The Spanish cable version of CBS came as did a photographer from Newsday, a Long Island based newspaper.

At 7:00 p.m. many from the consulate went downtown to the Federal building to join a Stations of the Cross protest in response to recent INS raids and rounding up of undocumented workers. Several people captured in last week's raid had participated in New York Zapatista meetings and activities. At the Federal building, INS headquarters, there were at least 200 people, the vast majority (95%?) were from New York's Mexican communities. This event, which was well covered by the media, including international Spanish language television like ECO, was pulled together in less than a week by the Asociacion Tepeyac de New York and several from NY Zapatistas. At each Station of the Cross a statement was read. Throughout there were links made between low intensity war in Chiapas, INS raids and roundups in New York, and how they are situated in neoliberalism, neocolonialism, and globalization. The first paragraph of the first station read as follows:

"Los que gobiernan este mundo imponen el llamado Neoliberalismo, Nuevo Colonialismo, o Globalizacion dondequiera. NAFTA o el tratado de libre comercio con Mexico es una de sus concreciones."

The beta actions of Electronic Civil Disobedience had mixed reviews, both in face-to-face reaction and on-line reports. The actions also had mixed results. The strongest critique of Electronic Civil Disobedience revolved around the meaning of "civil disobedience." Others were less concerned with the literal meaning of these words and enjoyed some of the features on the April 10 web site. There were mixed reports about the impact. Remember this was an experiment, a test, a dress rehearsal. Part of the experiment was to see if people all around the world can act at the same time on the Net. This seems to be the case. Yesterday, when some tried to access the web site of Zedillo, they could not. But when others tried, they were able to. It seems that numerous people were tuned in to Flood Net: Version 1.0. Probably at certain points during the day a critical mass was reached at which points access to Zedillo's web page were temporarily cut off.

Please send both positive and negative critical reaction to what appeared on the April10.html web page, the dress rehearsal of The Electronic Disturbance Theater, to <mailto:sjw210@is8.nyu.edu> and to <mailto:rdom@thing.net>



ECD Homepage

## Successful action against Zedillo web site on April 10

For a test, beta action, and dress rehearsal, we all did an excellent job!

On Friday, April 10, there were 8,141 hits on the Flood Net URL which activated a looped ping command sent to the President Zedillo web site in Mexico City. These hits came from 23 countries! When a user visited the Flood Net URL a command to send a request to access the web site of the Zedillo administration was sent every 7 seconds for as long as the user was connected to Flood Net.

We know that Zedillo's web site was successfully interrupted intermittently throughout the day on April 10. We base this claim on our own observations and on reports received from others who informed us when the Zedillo site was down. We estimate that when 500 or more people were simultaneously connected to Flood Net this caused the Zedillo site to become inaccessible. This occurred during times of peak connectivity to Flood Net.

Our actions were significant enough that there were attempts to break into the T1 servers at The Thing. Our actions received attention at a provider in Mexico. Someone from the machine `t3s31.data.net.mx` tried to gain access to computers at The Thing but failed. Stefan was spammed with about 3,000 messages containing cryptic warnings.

We have proven again that we can act collectively and simultaneously on the Net! Our action builds on a similar plan issued earlier this year by the Anonymous Digital Coalition. The difference is that this time we automated the web site reloading process. Let's see what improvements we can make for next time.

Like for April 10, there will be a phased in release of information about the next tactical suggestion in advance of May 10. Actually, we think it dangerous to centralize this information at The Thing. We are just a very small group of people in New York. We are looking for people to collaborate with us in establishing a global network of sites from which electronic actions against the Mexican government can be activated.

We encourage people to begin experimenting with ping batch files and similar devices. Start to familiarize yourselves with what we did and do it yourselves. (See instructions). Copy and distribute knowledge. Spread the URL.

We have created a listserv for people who want to be involved in project development. The criterion for admission is that we know you or you come highly recommended from someone we know. We also have more secure private chat space available.

Electronic Civil Disobedience

- PLEASE DISTRIBUTE WIDELY -

**THE ELECTRONIC DISTURBANCE THEATER**  
<http://www.nyu.edu/projects/wray/ecd.html>

- For immediate release -

July 8, 1998

**THE ELECTRONIC DISTURBANCE THEATER SUPPORTS "JF"**  
**THE YOUNG BRITISH ANTI-NUCLEAR HACKER**

The Electronic Disturbance Theater, a group of computerized artists/activists and developers of FloodNet software, issues today the following statement of support for the young British hacker, known as "JF", who recently hacked into and placed anti-nuclear messages in over 300 web sites.

- 1) we support the actions of JF the young British hacker who placed anti-nuclear messages on over 300 web sites.
- 2) we believe this type of political hacking IS a valid form of political expression and that it is NOT cyber-terrorism as some governments would lead us to believe.
- 3) we think that people like JF should be honored, praised, and respected for having the courage and will to take this sort of action.
- 4) we urge others with high moral consciences and software capability to follow JF's lead.

**THE ELECTRONIC DISTURBANCE THEATER**

Ricardo Dominguez, New York, NY, <http://www.thing.net/~rdom/>  
Carmin Karasic, Boston, MA, <http://custwww.xensei.com/users/carmin/>  
Paco Nathan, Austin, TX, <http://www.fringeware.com/>  
Brett Stalbaum, San Jose, CA, <http://switch.sjsu.edu/web/v3n3/JTDDS/index.html>  
Stefan Wray, New York, NY, <http://www.nyu.edu/projects/wray/projects/ecd.html>

\*\*\*\*\*

**ADD YOUR NAME OR YOUR GROUP'S NAME TO THE LIST OF SUPPORTERS**

If you support the above statement of the Electronic Disturbance Theater and would like to add your name or your group's name to the list of signatories, please send that information along with your web site address to: [sjw210@is8.nyu.edu](mailto:sjw210@is8.nyu.edu)

When we have accumulated what seems to be an appropriate number of co-signers to this statement of support for "JF" we will release this to British and international media.

\*\*\*\*\*

## DETAILS ABOUT THE ACTIONS OF "JF"

For extensive coverage of the ongoing actions of "JF" and his allies, set your browser to: <http://www.antonline.com/>

See the most recent information below.

\*\*\*\*\*

### Anti-Nuke Cracker Strikes Again

by James Glave for Wired news

5:08pm 3.Jul.98.PDT

An 18-year-old member of the anti-nuclear cracker group that last month wreaked havoc with email and Web servers at India's atomic research center has struck again with another Internet political protest.

In what may be the largest "mass hack" ever undertaken, the cracker, who goes by the name "JF," along with a number of anonymous colleagues, simultaneously defaced more than 300 Web sites late Thursday. The group replaced the sites' homepages with an image of a mushroom cloud and an anti-nuclear screed.

"This mass takeover goes out to all the people out there who want to see peace in this world," read the 800-word declaration that graced an eclectic mix of general interest, entrepreneur, adult, sport, and fan sites until early Friday morning.

Affected domains included sites for The World Cup, Wimbledon, The Ritz Casino, actor Drew Barrymore, and The Saudi Royal Family. Some of the sites were still defaced or down as of late Friday afternoon, when Wired News spoke with JF over Internet Relay Chat.

"The year is 1998," wrote JF, who is based in England. "We should be moving towards world peace in the millennium, and nuclear warfare [and] testing is NO way forward. It can destroy the world," the teen said.

"I'm only young; I don't want a hostile world on the edge of a nuclear conflict," he added.

The mass hack happened almost by accident. While scanning a large network, looking for security weaknesses, JF and his colleagues came across a Web site hosting company called EasySpace. The firm, based in Kingston upon Thames, England, offers "virtual domain" hosting -- an arrangement whereby multiple Web sites are located on a single server.

"We ... came across this, at first by accident, then [we] realized what it was, and as we were planning a mass hack, we decided to put it into operation," JF said.

The teen said that he and his colleagues -- members of another group called Ashtray Lumberjacks -- penetrated EasySpace's network with what they claimed was a nonpublic attack, and ran computer code that inserted the same altered Web page on all the sites hosted at EasySpace.

The entire operation was completed in approximately one hour, he said.

EasySpace representatives declined to comment, aside from forwarding to Wired News a copy of the email the company sent to affected customers.

"This attacked [sic] coincided with us preparing to move our Easypost mail system onto a new server and receive upgraded software," the message read in part.

"We will be re-installing the operating systems of the server your Web site is hosted on over the weekend and will be upgrading the security. Apologies for any inconvenience that may have been caused," the message concluded.

The email included instructions for customers to restore their own Web sites, suggesting that EasySpace had no backups of its own.

The protest Web page bore the logo of JF's group Milw0rm. Last month, the same group claimed responsibility for stealing email and deleting Web servers at the Bhabha Atomic Research Centre in Bombay, India. In the latest protest statement, the crackers expressed their disappointment that peace talks had not begun on the subcontinent.

"This tension is not good, it scares you as much as it scares us. For you all know that this could seriously escalate into a big conflict between India and Pakistan and possibly even World War III, and this CANNOT happen," the text read.

John Vranesevich, founder of the computer security Web site AntiOnline, said that mass Web page attacks, affecting multiple sites at one time, are not common events.

"Usually any Internet Service Provider that hosts such a large number of domains has very good security procedures in place simply because they are usually a larger operation," Vranesevich said.

Vranesevich added that the group was unusual in that its members appear to be driven as much by politics as they are by computer security issues.

"They're not claiming to be hacking to help progress computer security and to help make new exploits known. They're doing it for political reasons; it's not the means that's important it's the end result," Vranesevich said.

# Not Found

The requested URL /~rdom/ecd/real.html was not found on this server.

Cyberpower For Peace In Chiapas: Action Alert

\*\*\* For immediate release: January 19, 1998 \*\*\*

CALL FOR VIRTUAL SIT-INS AT FIVE MEXICO FINANCIAL WEB SITES

The following call for a NETSTRIKE FOR ZAPATA on Thursday, January 29, comes from the Anonymous Digital Coalition in Italy. It calls for simultaneous world-wide virtual sit-ins at five Mexico City financial institution's web sites.

Rarely have grassroots groups exercised cyberpower in this way. Clearly people in Italy are using their creativity and imagination. This is a unique opportunity to move into new terrain for coordinated world-wide action. Be part of what is probably the first globally coordinated virtual sit-in!

Below is the English version and includes correct information for all time zones in North America. The original message from the Autonomous Digital Coalition which includes Spanish and Italian versions can be found in the Chiapas95 archives: <http://www.eco.utexas.edu/faculty/Cleaver/chiapas95.html>

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NETSTRIKE FOR ZAPATA

On Sun, 18 Jan 1998 14:08:07 -0500, Anonymous anon@anon.efga.org wrote:

-----BEGIN PGP SIGNED MESSAGE-----

NetStriking for Zapata (from Anonymous Digital Coalition)

In solidarity with the Zapatista movement we welcome all the netsurfers with the ideals of justice, freedom, solidarity and liberty within their hearts, to sit-in the day 29/01/1998 from 4:00 p.m. GMT (Greenwich Mean Time) to 5:00 p.m. GMT (Greenwich Mean Time) in the following five web sites, symbols of Mexican neoliberalism:

Bolsa Mexicana de Valores  
<http://www.bmv.com.mx>  
 Grupo Financiero Bitel  
<http://www.bital.com.mx>  
 Grupo Financiero Bancomer  
<http://www.bancomer.com.mx>  
 Banco de Mexico  
<http://www.banxico.org.mx>  
 Banamex  
<http://www.banamex.com>

Technical instructions:

Connect with your browser to the upper mentioned web sites and push the bottom "reload" several times for an hour (with in between an interval of few seconds)

1) For Netscape navigator users on PC, Apple Macintosh and Unix o.s.:  
- From the Option menu select Preferences and set up:  
memory cache = 0  
disk cache = 0  
verify document = Every Time  
- From The Option menu select Network Preferences, and activate the No Proxies option

2) For Microsoft Internet Explorer users:  
from the View menu select Options - Advanced - and in the Temporary Internet File Box  
select Never

Next messages will be signed with our PGP Key  
During netstrike time you can connect to IRC channel #netstrike  
on server: irc.funet.fi

-----  
Your local time zone  
related to Greenwich Mean Time

City	Local Time
------	------------

GMT -10	
Hawaii	
from 6:00 to 7:00 am	

GMT -9	
Alaska	
from 7:00 to 8:00 am	

GMT -8	
Pacific Coast (USA, Canada), Tijuana, San Francisco	
from 8:00 to 9:00 am	

GMT -7	
West Time Zone (Usa, Canada), Arizona,	
from 9:00 to 10:00 am	

GMT -6	
Ciudad de Mexico, Saskatchewan, Central Time Zone (USA, Canada)	
from 10.00 to 11.00 am	

GMT -5	
East Time Zone (USA, Canada), Indiana (East), Bogota', Lima, Montreal, New York	



from 11:00 am to 12:00 pm

GMT -4  
Caracas, La Paz, Atlantic Coast (Canada)  
from 12:00 to 1:00 pm

-----  
Anonymous Digital Coalition  
OUR PGP KEY  
Type Bits/KeyID Date User ID  
pub 1024/5E91A4FD 1998/01/17 Anonymous Digital Coalition

- -----BEGIN PGP PUBLIC KEY BLOCK-----  
Version: 2.6.3i

mQCNAzTBCDUAAAEALvXzbXwFUCI7naWtWgodSBadI/pMFPpwCYRCFY8Xr7dMIV2  
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Xn687OHIpRF7iVrgdqmicLsqSm5gLE7/oo0JMfdJ8K1AGS2QUWb8W41ekaT9AAUR  
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US3Oq4R6eI/1fB3fwI40/aqnld3mObf46JtWUzBv8g5YhB2/Gw==  
=OMm5  
- -----END PGP PUBLIC KEY BLOCK-----

-----BEGIN PGP SIGNATURE-----  
Version: 2.6.3i  
Charset: cp850

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xxfXCWG6nJUJPnjq4yY+LOcoaLJ34UXJ1iL3se/Ym+ZtUxc2c/EBbraLcQ0uIm8s  
64GCeJ5XPf8=  
=3+oz  
-----END PGP SIGNATURE-----

Net Diver  
Isole nella rete <http://www.ecn.org>  
Key fingerprint = ED 32 A9 2B 62 54 52 FB B0 CB E0 24 46 34 73 AB



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### Submissions

Send comments, ideas, texts, and links to [Stefan Wray](#) and [Ricardo Dominguez](#)

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### Join the ECD distribution list

*send a message to:*

[listproc@listproc.thing.net](mailto:listproc@listproc.thing.net)

*in the body of the message:*

subscribe ecd Firstname Lastname

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### About Us

The Electronic Disturbance Theater and Electronic Civil Disobedience

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### Our Web Sites

[Ricardo Dominguez](#)

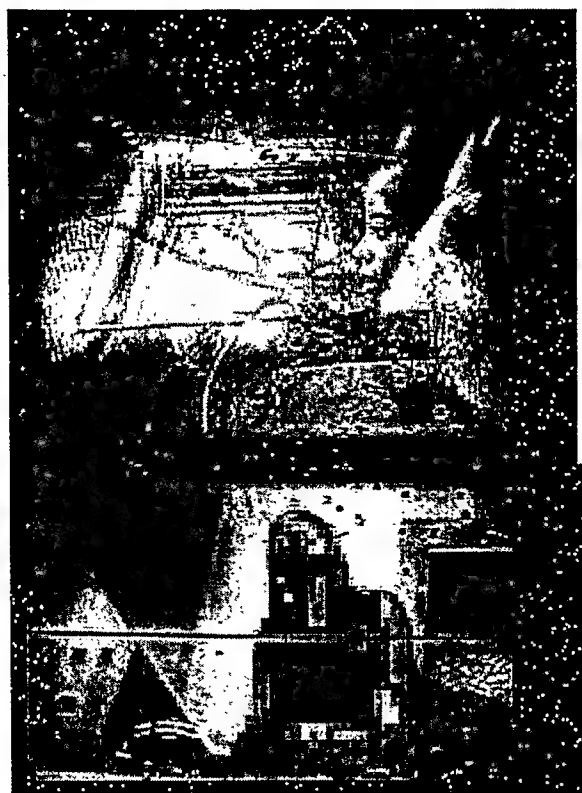
[Carmin Karasic](#)

[Paco Nathan](#)

[Brett Stalbaum](#)

[Stefan Wray](#)





digital artist . carmin karasic . software engineer

[frontpage](#)



FringeWare News Network

events  
Barry DeFacto  
FringeWare



cuisine  
album  
politix  
anagrams  
lust





# Brett Stalbaum



Graduate Student  
Computers in Art, Design, Research and Education Institute, CADRE  
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President of SWITCH, the new-media journal of the CADRE institute

- c5 Information Analyst Cell researcher and author of the **C5 IAC Visualization Tool**, a java application for modeling the data generated by cybernetic radio controlled surveillance probes.
- Java Programmer for the **Zapatista Tactical Floodnet**, In collaboration with Carmin Karasic, Stefan Wray and tireless agit-artist-activist Ricardo Dominguez. Here is some press:
  1. Wired News
  2. New York Times (you will need to establish a free account)
- The Joint Tactical Disinformation Distribution System:  
WARNING: You will be observed, and may be in violation of U.S. Law.
- Homage to Mr.Net.Art
- Hostage situation
- Article for SWITCH: Conjuring Post-Worthlessness: contemporary web art and the post-modern context.
- Explore the research results of the CADRE Institute expedition to Area 51. While you are there, Take a Trip on the ET Highway, and don't miss the Spamming of Nellis AFB.
- Article for SWITCH: Art on the Internet and the Mediating Influence of the Search Engine.
- Teleidentity - A movie project.
- BS Brand Art- an Adobe PDF version of package design for retail art that can be printed from the web and assembled.  
It's FREE ART!
- Videography/Filmography. PDF format listing work from 1991 to 1995.

## *Stefan Wray*

*electronic civil disobedience*

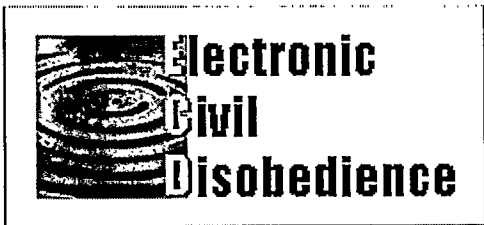
*writing*

*resume*

*biography*

*email*

*links*



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# **The Electronic Disturbance Theater and Electronic Civil Disobedience**

by Stefan Wray on June 17, 1998

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## **The Electronic Disturbance Theater**

The Electronic Disturbance Theater (EDT) is a small group of cyber activists and artists engaged in developing the theory and practice of Electronic Civil Disobedience (ECD). Until now the group has focused its electronic actions against the Mexican and U.S. governments to draw attention to the war being waged against the Zapatistas and others in Mexico. But ECD tactics have potential application by a range of political and artistic movements. The Electronic Disturbance Theater, working at the intersections of radical politics, recombinant and performance art, and computer software design, has produced an ECD device called Flood Net, URL based software used to flood and block an opponent's web site. While at present a catalyst for moving forward with ECD tactics, the Electronic Disturbance Theater hopes to eventually blend into the background to become one of many small autonomous groups heightening and enhancing the ways and means of computerized resistance.

## **Electronic Civil Disobedience (see longer article)**

Acting in the tradition of non-violent direct action and civil disobedience, proponents of Electronic Civil Disobedience are borrowing the tactics of trespass and blockade from these earlier social movements and are applying them to the Internet. A typical civil disobedience tactic has been for a group of people to physically blockade, with their bodies, the entranceways of an opponent's office or building or to physically occupy an opponent's office – to have a sit-in. Electronic Civil Disobedience, as a form of mass decentered electronic direct action, utilizes virtual blockades and virtual sit-ins. Unlike the participant in a traditional civil disobedience action, an ECD actor can participate in virtual blockades and sit-ins from home, from work, from the university, or from other points of access to the Net. Further, the ECD actor can act against an opponent that is hundreds if not thousands of miles away. The Electronic Disturbance Theater, primarily through its Flood Net device, is promoting ways to engage in global, mass, collective and simultaneous Electronic Civil Disobedience and direct action.



## Digital Zapatismo (see longer article)

The Zapatistas in Chiapas, Mexico, immediately entered the global stage just after January 1, 1994 when their communiqués signed by Subcomandante Marcos were distributed across the world through the Net. Quickly, through pre-existing and newly formed listservs, newsgroups, and Cc: lists, news, reports, analyses, announcements about demonstrations, and calls for intercontinental gatherings spread throughout the Americas, Europe, Asia, Africa, and Australia. We began to hear the Zapatistas use the terms intercontinental “networks of struggle” and “networks of resistance.” This new media, the Internet, became a vital means for the transmission of information from inside the conflict zone in Chiapas to other points of resistance in Mexico and to points beyond Mexico’s physical borders. Until recently the primary use of the Internet by the global pro-Zapatista movement has been as a communication tool. However, in recent times, particularly since the Acteal Massacre in Chiapas at the end of last year, the Internet has increasingly been seen as not only a site or a channel for communication, but also as a site for direct action and a site for Electronic Civil Disobedience. The Electronic Disturbance Theater, through its promotion of ECD tactics vis a vis the pro-Zapatista movement, is pushing the envelope and is challenging the notion that the Internet should be safeguarded solely as a site for communication; it should be a site for direct action as well.

## Flood Net

In January of this year, a group from Italy, the Anonymous Digital Coalition, circulated a proposal through the Zapatista networks for a virtual sit-in to take place on five web sites of Mexico City financial institutions. Their suggested method was for many people to be simultaneously, and note manually, striking the reload key of the targeted web sites on the theory that if enough people participated in this action, that these web sites could be effectively blockaded. Based on this theory of simultaneous and collective, yet decentered, electronic action against a targeted web site, the group that became the Electronic Disturbance Theater automated the process of manually striking the reload key repeatedly. On April 10, Flood Net Tactical Version 1.0 was showcased during a dress rehearsal action of Electronic Civil Disobedience against Mexican President Zedillo’s web site. As a Java applet reload function, the first test of Flood Net sent an automated reload request every seven seconds to Zedillo’s page. Reports from participants and our observations confirmed that the more than 8,000 participants in this first Flood Net action intermittently blocked access to the Zedillo site on that day. The next site for electronic action was the Clinton White House web site on May 10. A similar Flood Net device was deployed. Instead of reload requests being sent every 7 seconds that figure was cut to every 3. But due to using 5 mirror sites, most of which did not have counters on them, we do not have an accurate account of the participant’s numbers. And due to lack of reports about White House web site blockage and an assumption that the White House page exists on a much larger computer than the Zedillo page, it seems that the Clinton web site was not effectively blocked on May 10.

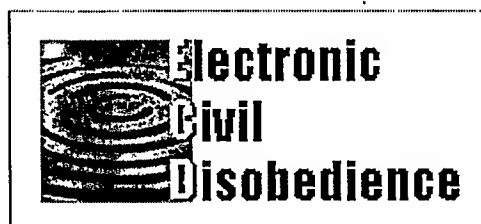
## Mexico Government Strikes Back

To protest the increased deportation of international human rights observers and to again demonstrate the ability of people physically outside Mexico's geographic borders to act against an agency of the Mexican government, the Electronic Disturbance Theater chose Mexico's Secretaria de Gobernacion for its June 10 ECD action. This governmental department oversees Mexico's immigration service and is directly responsible for the deportation of international observers. Gobernacion also oversees Mexico's federal public security forces that have been working in conjunction with the military against Zapatista communities in Chiapas. As on April 10 and May 10, ECD on June 10 against the Gobernacion web site used a version of Flood Net. But this time, something curious happened. The Mexican government struck back. The Mexican Government or programmers hired by the government developed a countermeasure against Flood Net. The Electronic Disturbance Theater believes the following is what happened. A Java script was placed in the Secretaria de Gobernacion's web site that was designed to activate whenever Flood Net was directed toward it. Upon activation, the Gobernacion site would open window after window on the Flood Net users browser. If the Flood Net user remained connected long enough, their browser, whether it be Netscape or Explorer, could crash. As of this writing EDT software designers are working to correct the problem in an attempt to make this sort of countermeasure in future actions ineffective.

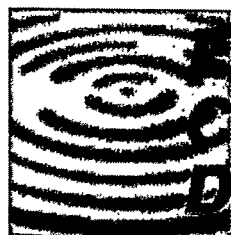
## Future Directions

In its short lived history, the Electronic Disturbance Theater has demonstrated the capability to take action against portions of a political opponent's Internet infrastructure. While at the same it has shown that its actions are of such a scale that they warrant state reaction and intervention, at least on the part of the Mexican government. The Electronic Disturbance Theater will continue to grow and move beyond tactics such as Flood Net. Eventually, tactical devices like Flood Net will just be one potential tool out of an array of electronic machines and software devices that cyber activists and artists will have access to and know how to use. We hope that soon, the Electronic Disturbance Theater becomes only one small group among a multiplicity of small groups, nodes, or cells, that push forward the ways and means for global electronic resistance to occur. We are already involved at the international level. This September's Ars Electronica Festival in Linz, Austria, an annual festival celebrating the juncture of arts and technology, will focus on Infowar and has already accepted our SWARM proposal. Think of a swarm as an array of Flood Net-like devices, arising, acting, and dispersing simultaneously against an array of cyberspatial political targets. If the electronic pulses generated by our Flood Net actions are represented by a small mountain stream, the electronic pulses generated by a swarm of convergent ECD actions are a raging torrent. We invite you to participate in, to help us promote, and to create new forms of Electronic Civil Disobedience.

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# Electronic Civil Disobedience

FOR CURRENT ECD ACTION PAGE [CLICK HERE >>>>> ECD ACTION](#)

10.15.98 *Electronic Disturbance Theater at Harvard Law School*

- [Presentation to Berkman Center for Internet and Society](#)
- [Notes on Internet and Society class](#)
- [Audio of Internet and Society class, Part 1](#)
- [Audio of Internet and Society class, Part 2](#)
- [Web site for Internet and Society class](#)

10.12.98 *Electronic Disturbance Theater Presentation, Audio File* **NEW!**

09.26.98 *Reason for moving main ECD page to the Thing's server*

09.10.98 *SWARM Chronology*

09.08.98 *Email Message from DISA to NYU Computer Security*

09.xx.98 *The Zapatista Tactical FloodNet*

09.xx.98 *The Ante-Chamber of Revolution: A Prelude to a Theory of Resistance and Maps*

08.05.98 *Bottom Up Information Warfare Theory and Practice Version 1.0*

08.01.98 *Paris Salon or Boston Tea Party: Recasting Electronic Democracy*

07.07.98 *Rhizomes Nomads and Resistant Internet Use*

06.17.98 *The Electronic Disturbance Theater and Electronic Civil Disobedience*

06:xx.98 *SWARM: An ECD Project for Ars Electronica '98*

05.05.98 *Die Umwandlung des Widerstands der Maschinenstürmer in einen virtuellen Widerstand*

05.01.98 *For Their Civil Disobedience, the 'Sit-In' Is Virtual*

05.01.98 *A Contribution to the Discussion of Electronic Civil Disobedience*

04.29.98 *Electronic Disturbance Theater Response to A Dirty War in Internet*

04.27.98 *A Dirty War in Internet (analysis)*

- 04.07.98 *Transforming Luddite Resistance into Virtual Luddite Resistance*
- 03.20.98 *On Electronic Civil Disobedience*
- 03.20.98 *Digital Zapatismo*
- 03.20.98 *How to Jam an Opponent's Fax Machine*
- 02.04.98 *Mexico Rebel Supporters Hack Government Home Page*
- 01.18.98 *Call Virtual Sit-ins at Five Mexico Financial Web Sites*
- 01.01.98 *Intercontinental Cyberspace Liberation Army Declares Netwar Against Mexican State*
- 09.xx.97 *Photos of U.S. Embassy in Mexico City*
- 08.xx.97 *Recombinant Networks*
- 08.xx.97 *The Drug War and Information Warfare in Mexico*
- xx.xx.96 *Information Warfare section of The Revolution Will Be Digitized*

*wray home*



# **Electronic Civil Disobedience**

## **Notes on Electronic Disturbance Theater's presentation at Harvard Law School**

by Stefan Wray

On Thursday morning, Ricardo and I met at La Guardia airport and flew on a US Air shuttle to Logan airport in Boston where Carmin met us at the gate. We drove in Carmin's car from the Boston side of the river over to Cambridge and found parking near where we to spend the rest of the day. We finally arrived in Cambridge at about 1 o'clock and had about 3 hours to kill until we were supposed to address this Harvard class at 4:10. We ate lunch at a Mexican restaurant and then walked around Cambridge, passing through the main square. When we were on the Harvard campus we passed the street corner of Bow and Arrow. This prompted memory in Ricardo's brain back to days when he studied James in Western Literature. In fact, Ricardo knew quite a bit about the Harvard campus from literature he had read years ago.

At around 3:30 we found Pound Hall, the home of Harvard Law School and went to the fifth floor where the Berkman Center on Internet and Society is housed. Here we met the instructor of the class, Jonathan Zittrain, and Andrew Shapiro. I hadn't realized that we were to be part of a panel with others. I thought it was just to be Ricardo, Carmin, and I. Andrew Shapiro is a "First Amendment Law Fellow" at the Brennan Center for Justice and NYU's School of Law. Interesting that I had to go all the way to Cambridge to meet him. We also learned that a representative of the Department of Justice was supposed to come, had been invited to be on the panel, but had declined. We briefly talked in this instructor's office and went over how the panel would proceed.

Andrew Shapiro's interests are in how public fora can be created on the Internet so that dissident voices get a chance to be heard. He was particularly focused, it seems, on how government can or should mandate that such spaces exist. This is a different approach from what we are doing, which clearly does not rely on any government to intervene.

Once in the class, the panelists all introduced themselves. Following this, the instructor asked the class to go over some basic issues of constitutional law. He was eliciting discussion as to what was the definition of public forum, or the public sphere. Case law referenced in this discussion had to do with the experience of free speech questions in private shopping malls. [Note: At the end of the day, when Ricardo, Carmin, and I sat around a table having a drink in a bar, we commented on how odd it seemed to be applying case law from shopping malls to the Internet. This flowed into a broader conversation on mapping and maps (aka ideology and ideological frames), where law is seen just as one map or frame that can be used to interpret and project 'reality'.]

At the end of these brief discussions about constitutional law questions, I was asked by the instructor to read a short statement that I had written. [Initially, the instructor had been hesitant about me doing this reading, thinking that it could be too long, but it only took about 5 or 6 minutes. Statement is attached at the end.] Following this, Carmin gave an explanation of the technical aspects of FloodNet and answered questions from the instructor. Ricardo entered this conversation as well. We clarified for the class how FloodNet works and what the intention of it is. At this point, the conversation floated over to Andrew Shapiro again and his emphasis on public fora. This was the pattern of the class for the remainder of the time, shifting back and forth into a conversation about our project and about Shapiro's project. So our presentation and the focus of the class was not solely focused on Electronic Civil Disobedience, FloodNet, or Hacktivism.

Shapiro at one point said he thought we were dissident speakers, but that "we were as lost in cyberspace as we were when we started." And he then pointed to the NY Times (Cybertimes) article that is linked to our web site. He said that was the best thing so far for us. Clearly, he had not known about other media coverage that we had received. We clarified this for him and for the class. But this brings up a good point, we should probably make sure that as much of the media coverage of this project as possible is linked to the web site.

Following a back and forth of discussion on the panel, the instructor opened up the class for students to ask questions and make comments. There were some prosecutorial minded students in the class who seemed to be against what we were doing. But interestingly there were students who seemed to support us. In fact, at the end of the class a number of students came up to talk with us at a brief reception and expressed their support. One student, a self described "knee jerk Republican" said that at first he was really opposed to us, but that after hearing what we said



and how we said it he came think we were not so bad after all. We changed some hearts and minds, I think. One young Asian woman, who had not said anything during the class came up to me at the end and said that I shouldn't get the wrong idea about the sentiment of the class, she said she thought what we were doing was quite innovative and she supported it.

Backing up a minute: Once we had clarified more what we were about and how we were using FloodNet, the instructor began to open up the discussion to the class to talk more about the legal nature. At one point we specifically looked at code 1030, a section of federal law that deals with computer crimes. We looked at a specific section that talks about how it is illegal to intend to block access to a site. [The specific text of 1030 is available as a link to the Cybertimes article about our project that appeared in April. And the Cybertimes article is available on Carmin's page and on my page.] The instructor polled the students at one point to ask if they thought we were violating this section of the federal code. A good number of the students thought we were.

However, I asked a question, that I later learned was called a "jurisdictional" question. I said "who would prosecute us?" and "who would be prosecuted?" If the participants in FloodNet are dispersed throughout the world, doesn't this pose serious problems for potential prosecutors?" This question seemed to deflate or confuse or complicate the issue. This was discussed by the class.

Following the class, we had a brief reception and continued to talk one on one to some of the students. I talked with one student who had spent the summer as an intern with the Department of Justice in their computer crimes division (not sure of exact title). This was quite interesting to talk with someone who had been on the inside. My contention was that at this point, it is unlikely that the Department of Justice is going to try to press charges against those of us who are using FloodNet. He said that I was probably right. I said that it is a political decision to go forth and prosecute. He agreed. He said that the DOJ computer crimes division has much more serious matters on their agenda. He was referring to cases of young hackers who were actually breaking in to systems.

There seemed to be general agreement that at this point in time, we are still operating within a window of opportunity that is if not ahead of the law, as strictly interpreted, is definitely still out ahead of the prosecutorial or political range of the DOJ. This could, perhaps, explain why the DOJ representative did not want to show up to the panel,

because it would have caused him or her to have to explain why in fact we were not being arrested.

But even though some of the Harvard Law students thought that we may be violating parts of Code 1030, it is still not clear that we are. The focal point or the issue that needs to be looked at more clearly is around the question of intent. As Carmin pointed out in the panel, our intent is to cause a disturbance and not to bring down a server. Blocking access to a server may be a side effect or a result if enough people join us in creating a disturbance.

Following the class presentation, and the reception, Carmin, Ricardo, and I walked back through Cambridge towards where the car was parked. We talked about maps (ideologies) and mapping (ideological framing), where the legal frame is just one way of interpreting reality. There are a number of maps to draw onto the Net to ascribe boundaries of power and control. The map of the Bunker. The map of the Castle. The map of the Rhizome. The map of the Network. The map of the Wild West.

We went to a bar and continued about maps. Carmin drove us back to the airport. And Ricardo and I flew back to New York.

**Saturday, September 26, 1998**

To friends and supporters,

On September 8, 1998, someone from the Automated System Security Incident Support Team (ASSIST), an office within the Defense Information Systems Agency (DISA), sent an email message to New York University's computer security recommending that NYU remove the ECD web site because it was "advocating flooding a number of public web servers including <http://www.defenselink.mil>."

The next day, on September 9, while in Austria at the Ars Electronica InfoWar Festival, I received an email from the Senior System Manager of NYU's System & Network Security Group stating that: "We have received a recent complaint from someone within the DISA of the DOD regarding the ECD web site you are maintaining on your page."

After returning to New York on September 13, I discussed the contents of the ECD web site with faculty in my department, associate and assistant deans in the School of Education, and with several staff members within the Academic Computing Facility. As a result of these conversations, I have agreed to remove portions of the ECD page that directly advocate Electronic Civil Disobedience actions and the application of FloodNet software.

Between September 16 and 20, we began to move the entire ECD site from NYU's server and to place it on the server of The Thing. The new web site address for the Electronic Disturbance Theater and its FloodNet project is now located at <http://www.thing.net/~rdom/ecd/ecd.html>

On September 20, I removed nearly all web site content from the NYU server in my haste to comply with the university's requests. Now I have reconstructed both the ECD site and my own personal home page. Henceforth this ECD web site will function as an archive for scholarly articles, reports, news, analyses, and other texts produced either by myself, others in the Electronic Disturbance, or anyone who is writing on the subjects related to the theme of Electronic Civil Disobedience.

Stefan Wray

[Return to ECD page](#)



## Chronology of SWARM

**September 10, 1998**

**Linz, Austria**

"We want all who walk the roads of truth to unite hearts."  
--The Zapatistas

To our Indigenous sisters and brothers of other organizations:  
To the Mexican people:  
To the people and governments of the world:

Dear sisters and brothers here is a long tale for your enjoyment:

**April 10**

The Electronic Disturbance Theater initiates its first act of Electronic Civil Disobedience to Stop the War in Mexico and in support of the Zapatistas in Chiapas, Mexico, which are followed by actions, using its FloodNet software, on May 10, June 10, June 28, July 3, July 19, and August 7. See <http://www.nyu.edu/projects/wray/ecd.html> for details.

**End of April**

Ricardo Dominguez of The Electronic Disturbance Theater writes a SWARM proposal for the Ars Electronica Festival on InfoWar and communicates this with festival organizers while they are visiting New York.

**July 12**

Stefan Wray of the Electronic Disturbance Theater arrived in Amsterdam and began to inform cyber activists and artists about the ECD project and SWARM.

**August 25, Tuesday**

The Electronic Disturbance Theater issues first bulletin about the upcoming SWARM action on September 9 and calls for a fall campaign of hybrid actions on the street and on the Net

In solidarity with the Zapatistas, indigenous peoples in Chiapas, others resisting the Mexican government, the global pro-Zapatista movement, and people everywhere struggling against neoliberalism and the global economy, the Electronic Disturbance Theater urges SWARM actions, multiple acts of Electronic Civil Disobedience, on Wednesday, September 9, 1998. (<http://www.nyu.edu/projects/wray/ecd.html>)

To demonstrate our capacity for simultaneous global electronic actions and to emphasize the multiple nature of our opponents, FloodNet will target three web sites in Mexico, the United States, and Europe representing three important sectors: government, military, and financial.

In Mexico, FloodNet will target President Zedillo's web site, (<http://www.presidencia.gob.mx/>) an obvious choice and one we have made before. In the United States, FloodNet will target the Pentagon, (<http://www.defenselink.mil/>) also an obvious choice given the level of U.S. military and intelligence involvement in Mexico. And in Germany, FloodNet will target the Frankfurt Stock Exchange, (<http://www.exchange.de/>) a less obvious choice, but one that makes sense as it is a key European financial site with high symbolic value and as Germany is a major player in the global neoliberal economy.

#### **September 4, Friday**

Stefan Wray of the Electronic Disturbance Theater arrives in Linz, Austria in the late afternoon and joins the HEART encampment (Hackers Electronic Art) outside the OpenX exhibit where from where SWARM was activated.

#### **September 5, Saturday**

Announcements about the SWARM action on September 9 are crafted and begin to be sent out over the Net late that night.

In solidarity with the Zapatistas in Chiapas, Mexico, and with people everywhere struggling against the global neoliberal economy, the Electronic Disturbance Theater calls for multiple acts of Electronic Civil Disobedience (SWARM), on Wednesday, September 9, 1998.

The Electronic Disturbance Theater issues this call in connection with its participation in the Ars Electronica Festival on Infowar, held in Linz, Austria, from September 7 to 12. (<http://web.aec.at/infowar>)

Actions will begin on Sept. 9 at 11:00 a.m. (Linz time) for a 24 hour

period. Other start times are: Berlin 11:00 a.m.; London 10:00 a.m.; New York 5:00 a.m.; Mexico City 4:00 a.m.; and San Francisco 2:00 a.m.

Our FloodNet software will target three web sites in Mexico, the United States, and Europe representing three important sectors: government, military, and financial.

- 1) President Zedillo (<http://www.presidencia.gob.mx>)
- 2) The Pentagon (<http://www.defenselink.mil>)
- 3) The Frankfurt Stock Exchange (<http://www.exchange.de>)

### **September 6, Sunday**

Ricardo Dominguez of the Electronic Disturbance Theater arrives in Linz, Austria at 3:30 a.m. after a 5 day train trip from Revolting in Manchester, England (<http://yourserver.co.uk>) where he presented a workshop and a panel on Electronic Civil Disobedience and spread news of the upcoming SWARM action against Mexico President Zedillo, the Pentagon, and the Frankfurt Stock Exchange.

Spanish versions of SWARM announcements are distributed via email

Electronic Disturbance Theater announced to the micro-power radio movement in the United States that it is prepared to release versions of FloodNet that can be applied during the upcoming "Showdown" with the Federal Communications Commission in Washington, DC on October 4 and 5.

### **September 7, Monday**

SWARM installation is completed. Disturbance Theater meets with Ars Electronica press office to attempt to obtain email addresses of journalists.

Critiques of FloodNet from within hacker community begin to be raised. One element of this critique is that FloodNet will not only impact targeted web sites but also begin to clog up the pipelines between participants computers and targeted sites

### **September 8, Tuesday**

Ricardo Dominguez and Stefan Wray meet with members of the HEART and other hackers to discuss the efficacy of the FloodNet software from a technical perspective. It is agreed that the hackers and critics will write a statement outlining their concerns

After meeting with HEART hackers and others, Dominguez and Wray test FloodNet by activating it on 16 machines in the OpenX. There appears to be no problem with using this number of machines.

RTMARK distributes announcement about the SWARM action to a massive

list of email contacts.

In solidarity with the Zapatistas in Mexico, the Electronic Disturbance Theater will launch its FloodNet software against the web sites of Mexican President Zedillo, the Pentagon, and the Frankfurt Stock Exchange on Wed., September 9, from its base at the Ars Electronica InfoWar Festival. These actions are part of the Electronic Disturbance Theater's SWARM presentation at the festival now happening in Linz, Austria.

Since April the Electronic Disturbance Theater has used its FloodNet software to engage in virtual sit-ins on the web sites of the Mexican government and the Clinton White House. Such electronic actions are designed to demonstrate collective and world-wide support for the Zapatistas in Chiapas and their opposition to the Zedillo government with its global neoliberal economic agenda.

The SWARM actions on September 9, targeting government, military, and financial web sites in three countries, will commence at 11:00 a.m. (Linz ) for a 24-hour period. Participants around the world will set their Internet browsers to the FloodNet page.

EDT receives messages of solidarity: "Keep up the good work! I placed your link on my page:

<http://www.angelfire.com/co/COMMONSENSE/wakeup.links.html>"

### **September 9, Wednesday**

At 7:32 a.m., Ricardo Dominguez received a threatening phone call, from someone presumed to be of the Mexican government, in his hotel room in Linz, Austria. Ars Electronica organizers and the Linz police have been informed and we await an official statement from the AEC organization regarding this incident.

Dominguez said: "I picked up and in very clear Spanish, Mexican Spanish, they said "We know who you are. We know where you are at. We know where your family is. We are watching you. Do not go downstairs. Do not make your presentation. Because you know what the situation is. This is not a game." And they hung up."

<http://www.aec.at/infowar/attack.html>

At 11:00 a.m. the SWARM action commenced. FloodNet was directed toward Mexican President Zedillo, the Pentagon, and the Frankfurt Stock Exchange.

At 11:00 Danish television interviews us. Later they post SWARM action on their web site and will use footage for television and audio for radio programs.

We receive requests to utilize FloodNet in Australia. "Having received info

about the floodnet Zapitista action, I am wondering (in a purely speculative manner) about the viability of a similar action directed at the developers of the Jabiluka Uranium mine in Kakadu National Park (a world heritage listed area) in Australia's Northern Territory."

Between the action commencing and a presentation in the ClosedX we noticed that countermeasures had been initiated against FloodNet. Wray began to send email to technicians in the United States to ascertain the source of the problem and to try to stop the attack.

At 1:05 p.m. Dominguez and Wray presented the history the Electronic Disturbance Theater at the ClosedX section of Ars Electronica. The presentation was followed by a useful discussion, continuing the critique and dialogue that had been initiated with a meeting hackers from the HEART and others.

Part of the critique of FloodNet was harsh: "FloodNet is both ineffective due to the upstream cache and pure evil, since it represents an abuse of the network. Even if the load was to take down a server (ignoring the free speech implications for a moment, free speech you want for yourself but deny to those with whom you disagree), you would not only impact communications with the target site, but also to those around it. FloodNet is \*unacceptable\* network abuse. As bad as spam, if not worse."

At 3:00 p.m. Dominguez is on the radio with  
<http://thing.at/orfkunstradio/STATIC/>

The Disturbance Theater begins to receive messages such as "Countermeasured effectively kept me from participating this morning; I'm wondering if you could give me an update on how things went." Another person wrote: "what's up ? seems we still get the java attack. any news?"

Within a half hour before the InfoWeapon contest award, Wray, a doctoral student at New York University receives an email message from Stephen Tihor, Senior System Manager, System & Network Security Group, Academic Computing Facility, at NYU stating that New York University had been contacted by the Department of Defense regarding the Electronic Civil Disobedience web site that is based on an NYU server

Mr. Wray,

We have received a recent complaint from someone within the DISA of the DOD regarding the ECD web site you are maintaining on your page. As you know freedom of speech is a vital part of the academic process and is one to which we are dedicated just as we are to insure that NYU is a good network citizen.



At 7:05 p.m. the Electronic Disturbance Theater made an opening announcement at the InfoWeapon Contest award ceremony to inform Ars Electronica participants that 1) Ricardo Dominguez had received a threatening phone call, 2) a hostile Java applet had been launched against FloodNet, and the 3) Stefan Wray had received an email message from New York University that system administrators there had been contacted by the DISA of DOD about the ECD page.

In the evening we receive an email message from Niall McKay of Wired News stating: "I presume that your attack was unsuccessful since the sites seem to be up and running?" We later learn that McKay contacts the DOD to ask about the countermeasure.

Later in the evening the SWARM base in Linz received email from Brett Stalbaum of the Electronic Disturbance Theater, of CADRE in San Jose, California, that he had stopped the Hostile Java attack on FloodNet:

"The counter-attack is paused for now. Someone has authored an applet called "Hostile Applet", which unlike the Java Script counter-measure, we can not turn off. It's a real applet just like the FloodNet. I changed the html to avoid the pages where they put the applet, so we should be ok for a while.

We receive another message that someone's hard drive crashed from the hostile Java attack. We later receive information that this crash is not cause of FloodNet, but a function of the hostile Java attack on FloodNet.

### **September 10, Thursday**

The Electronic Disturbance Theater received information from a Wired News reporter that the DOD (Pentagon) admitted to having had initiated the countermeasure, the Hostile Java applet against FloodNet.

This morning when we tried to access the [defenselink.mil](http://defenselink.mil) page it would not come up on the browser

STATS for the first 6hours of the action flow in:

Total hits: 14281. Countries that joined the Zapatista action:

US Commercial, US Educational, Austria, Italy, United Kingdom, Germany, Switzerland, Australia, Canada, Non-Profit Organization, Belgium, Mexico, Denmark, Netherlands, France, United States, Spain, Greece, US Military, Japan, Finland, Romania, Argentina, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Iceland, US Government, Taiwan, Sweden, Chile, Russian Federation, Uruguay, Croatia (Hrvatska), Latvia, Malaysia, Lithuania, Slovak Republic, India, Brazil, New Zealand (Aotearoa), Singapore, Hungary, Slovenia, Colombia and Turkey.

**P.S.** A long story we know, but so it goes. Time for Cerveza.

**P.P.S.** The War Machine says no, The HEART says good idea Bad Code!

We say to War Machine we live and we say Ya Basta! To the HEART we Listen, we can learn—but you must give us the gift of CARE. We need More from the HEART than a NO. We now need the Wisdom of a Yes. A YES that can make all worlds possible.

**P.P.P.S** We have a choice: we can have a cynical attitude in the face of the media,

To say that nothing can be done about the dollar power that creates  
Itself in images, words, digital communication, and computer systems that  
Invades not just with an invasion of power, but with a way of seeing that  
World, of how they think the world should look. We could say, well, “that’s  
The way it is” and do nothing. Or we can simply assume incredulity: we  
Can say that any communication by the media monopolies is a total lie.  
We can ignore it and go about our lives.

But there is a third option is neither conformity, nor skepticism, nor  
Distrust—to construct a different way—to show the world what is  
Really happening—to have a critical worldview and to become  
Interested in the truth of what happens to the people of this  
World who wish to a voice in a world where only those with  
Power can be heard.

**P.P.P.P.S.**

They are kicking us out of here. Tomorrow the Ministers of European Culture  
will be in this space.

They will turn off all the machines in two hours. Good bye for a few days.

## Email Message From DISA to NYU Computer Security

Date: Tue, 08 Sep 1998 14:45:22 -0400 (EDT)  
From: bpd@assist.mil  
Cc: bnazarof@ncis.navy.mil, ir@assist.mil  
Subject: Web Site

The URL in question is  
"<http://www.nyu.edu/projects/wray/ecd.html>."

In particular, the web site is advocating flooding a number of public web servers including <http://www.defenselink.mil>. The Web site in question is the coordinating site for this hostile action. I would recommend that NYU remove this site. Issues of liability should be seriously considered on your part.

Thanks for your cooperation,

Brian Dunphy  
DISA/ASSIST  
703-607-4217  
<http://www.assist.mil>



# The Zapatista Tactical FloodNet

A collabortive, activist and conceptual art work of the net  
by Brett Stalbaum

## FloodNet Functionality

Tactical FloodNet's automated features are used:

- 1) To reload a targeted web page several times per minute.
- 2) For the conceptual-artistic spamming of targeted server error logs.

The web site of an institution or symbol of Mexican neo-liberalism is targeted on a particular day. A link to FloodNet is then posted in a public call for participation in the tactical strike. Netsurfers follow this link; then by simply leaving their browser open the FloodNet Applet will automatically reload the target web page every few seconds. The intent is to disrupt access

to the targeted web site by flooding the host server with requests for that web site.

## Floodnet Interactivity

As FloodNet performs automatic reloads of the site in the background, slowing or halting access to the targeted server, FloodNet also encourages interaction on the part of individual protesters. Netsurfers may voice their political concerns on a targeted server via the "personal message" form which sends the surfer's own statement to the server error log. Additionally, a mouse click on the applet image (containing a representation of the targeted site), sends a predefined message to the server error log. In the current version of FloodNet, this process is automated as well.

## FloodNet as Conceptual Art

FloodNet is an example of conceptual net.art that empowers people through activist/artistic expression. By the selection of phases for use in building the "bad" urls, for example using "human\_rights" to form the url "http://www.xxx.gb.mx/human\_rights", the FloodNet is able to upload messages to server error logs by intentionally asking for a non-existent url. This causes the server to return messages like "human\_rights not found on this

server.” This works because of the way many http servers process requests for web pages that do not exist. FloodNet's Java applet asks the targeted server for a directory called, in this example, "human\_rights", but since that directory doesn't exist, the server returns the familiar "File not Found" or "Error 404" message, recording the bad request. This is a unique way to leave a message on that server.

Past versions of the FloodNet have tuned this idea to current events, such as during the June 10 protest when the names of the Zapatista farmers killed by the Mexican Army in military attacks on the autonomous village of El Bosque, were used in the construction of the "bad" urls. In an artistic sense, this is a way of remembering and honoring those who gave their lives in defense of their freedom. In a conceptual sense, the FloodNet performance was able to facilitate a symbolic return of the dead to the servers of those responsible for their murders.

## FloodNet Philosophy

“Only art history still knows that the famed geniuses of the Renaissance did not just create paintings and buildings, but calculated fortresses and constructed war machines. If the phantasm of all Information Warfare, to reduce war to software and its forms of death to operating system crashes, were to come true, lonesome hackers would take the place of the historic artist-engineers.”  
 Frederick Kittler  
<http://www.aec.at/infowar/NETSYMPOSIUM/ARCH-EN/msg00001.html>

Taking the place of “historic artist-engineers” only becomes possible if we focus on genius as a emergent quality of human-machinic networks (the cybernetic as distributed collective) . “Lonesome hackers”, is somewhat misleading in the context of fine artists working on software weapons, if only because it unfortunately indexes all of modernism’s notions of troubled genius, without qualifying it in the context of the conflation of biological life into the consciousness prosthetic of the network. The Zaps FloodNet hopefully serves as a counter example to this notion of individualist genius, because, as media art, it has emerged from and serves a community which genuinely requires the development of such attention weapons as a matter survival.

As an alternative to the re-emergence of the artist as the lonely hacker, we could in turn seek an ontological status for artist as "true" defensive worker in the network era. But the destructive implementation of “Defense” as

euphemism for war (as in the name change in the United States from the "Department of War" to the "Department of Defense"), long ago erased the distinction between defensive and offensive capabilities once evident in the various designs of fortresses and war machines. The cryptanalytical foundation

secrecy, correctly identified as the foundation of contemporary information processes, is simultaneously defensive and offensive under this implosion.

Can

the fortress be reinstantiated?

It seems that the reconstruction of the fortress as a somehow useful strategy is no less misguided and romantic than the reinstantiation of the Renaissance

artist figure as a cryptanalytical war engineer. If anything, the cryptanalytical accomplishments of the past two centuries have soundly defeated the wall as a defensive mechanism; not only by blurring the distinction between defense and offence (as in Ronald Reagan's star wars imaginary), but by simply rendering walls and other manifestations of protection useless.

As such, fortifications and secrecy are a kind of trap for information artists for many reasons. Information is ephemeral, becoming stale quickly, leaving it

as one of the most perishable of tactical tools. Additionally, most artists do not have the capital to compete with the information warfare apparatus of corporations and governments. And of course, no one really cares about an artist's secrets in any case! It is better to not have secrets, because to do so is to pretend walls of comfort around us which no longer exist. More importantly, it reduces the amount of friction the info-artist must face: secrecy requires little work if we are little concerned with it. It is better to take public actions which call attention to dangerous situations for real people. Artists as communications engineers, working in groups to design the

next generation of networked communications pulse-weapon, will allow still

larger groups to leverage their numbers in tactical performances of presence;

these are the goals of non-violent inforwar.

The Zaps FloodNet represents just such a collective weapon of presence. Designed as a collectively actuated weapon, inverting the logic of wide open

propaganda pipes by flooding network connections with millions of hits from

widely distributed, fully participatory nodes, the FloodNet enables a performance of presence which says to Mexico (and its close ally the United

States): "We are numerous, alert, and watching carefully." After the initial design, the roles played by communications artists are best described as only

the initial low-dimensional attractors upon which the critical tertiary

projection of similarity in the dynamic net-system of cybernetics is articulated. This is not only evident in user participation with the FloodNet performances, but in other similarly directed mass actions. Instead of the return of the Renaissance artist/engineer or the sedentary seclusion of the fortress, we seek instead the self-organization of human-machinic networks of good conscious, visibility, and presence.

Ricardo Dominguez- Organizer, Agitator, Artist, Theorist  
(<http://www.thing.net/~rdom>)

Carmin Karasic- Artist, Interface design and testing, Graphic Design  
(<http://www.pixelyze.com/users/carmin>)

Brett Stalbaum- Java Programmer, Artist and author of FloodNet Applet  
(<http://cadre.sjsu.edu/beestal>)

Stefan Wray- Theorist, Writer, and Agitator  
(<http://www.nyu.edu/projects/wray>)

Information on actions:  
(<http://www.nyu.edu/projects/wray/ecd.html>)

To actually instantiate the software and engage a target:  
(<http://www.thing.net/~rdom/zapsTactical/foyer2.htm>)

# The Ante-Chamber of Revolution: A Prelude to a Theory of Resistance and Maps

By ricardo dominguez

Ours is not the house of pain and misery.

That is how he who robs  
and deceives us has painted us.  
Ours is not the land of death and anguish.  
Ours is not the treason nor does our way have room for the forgetting.  
Ours are not the empty ground and the hollow sky.  
Ours is the house of light and joy.  
That is how we created it, that is how  
we struggle for it, that is how we nurture it.  
Ours is the land of life and hope.  
Ours is the path of peace  
which is planted with dignity and harvested  
with justice and liberty.

--FIFTH DECLARATION OF THE LACANDON JUNGLE

## The Ante-Chamber of Revolution

Zapatismo is not bound by the limits of interconnectivity or the raw violence of neo-liberalism. It is a network of hope embedded deep in the heart of a community who oppose the loss of voice in its own home. A community who walk with the ghost of history and the ghost of exchange. Zapatismo haunts the big MASK with small masks that walk between code. They have sent us notes about this virtual condition, some times they ask that we pass the notes on, and sometimes they ask us to sing a tender song. They say they became an intergalactic protocol by slipping under the electronic fabric one drunken night. They say the man they woke up with the next day screamed he had been tricked...then later came back screaming that this was his bed, his home, and his kitchen...but the man is wrong, very wrong...this was our home...a home for the homeless.

The Book of Mirrors, The Hybrid, and the MESH  
(a short essay):

Late Capital is caught by its own reflection, it wants to be both original and copy, soft and hard, top and bottom, speed and inertia. The Rand Corporation calls for hybrid hierarchies and networks, with both Top Sight Command and Distributed Network Teams that function as an



interconnected MESH of total command and total autonomy, for power only. The Hybrid MESH now has many names: flat power, soft power, liquid power, power ad infinitum. Late Capital agrees with Mao on what this power must do: centralize strategically, but decentralize tactically.

The Zapatistas say:

Ya basta! Break the Mirror! Do you really need Maps!\*

\*Maps (A Long Footnote):

Several different maps of information have been put on the block for our inspection: frontier, castle, real estate, rhizome, hive, matrix, virus, network, plug-in your own, etc., Each map creates a different line of flight, a different form of security, and a different pocket of resistance.

Frontier:

A digiscape full of drifters, free roaming data cowboys, mail tribes, code ranchers and bandwidth barons. ISP justice decides the laws for their community. Those that go beyond the local enclave's limit are on their own in a lawless infinity. On the frontier the only security one has is that of a few trusted URL's, ones' faithful machine, and keeping the VirusScan loaded and close at all times. On the Frontier: \*It's every link for itself and Microsoft against all.\*

**Resistance on the Frontier: Banditos! We don't need no Stinkin' Badges!**

Castles:

This is a space of bunkers and transcendental hierarchies, with moats, high walls, and drawbridges. Movement between these bunkers is done by Knights, bearing the latest war gear, protecting the flow of messages and goods. The most important defense of A Castle is the amount of "Air" between the outside and the castle's core. For Castles it is the roads between them they fear. Anything could be lurking in the dark woods.

**Resistance between Castles: Robin Hood! Steal from the Rich and Give to the Poor!**

Real Estate:

This is similar to where you are now, as you read or hear these words. Space is owned or rented by individuals transnational-companies, and anything in between. Lot's of big signs selling things, gentrification, homes for senior citizens, the endless streams of homeless. Everyone wants laws to protect the welfare of exchange under the sign of

social control. They often say they want to protect the children.  
In this space, only the commodity is protected.

**Resistance under the For Sale Sign: Squat the Future! Burn the sign down!**

**Rhizome:**

Here Bodies without Organs's schizflux between roots, pop-up flora, holes and machinic desire. Endless tendrils criss-cross space, some spaces become hard and never move again, some spaces become smooth and never crack, nothing escapes the virtual struggle between The State and The War Machine. Here endless interconnectivity rules all possibility as an either/or line of flight-territorialize or de-territorialize, you have no choice.

**Resistance at the root: Become a body with organs and smell the flowers.**

**The Hive:**

A wave-system so tightly bound that no difference resides between each segment of the wave. Each segment is part of a wave-mass, A SWARM. The Hive is able to absorb any change both within or without the SWARM. Each segment-wave functions as a SWARM, alone or apart from the other segments. Each element of a SWARM functions locally in parallel interdependence with the rest of the wave mass. The Hive and the SWARM act as one, but only in one direction. Each shift in the SWARM becomes a part of the HIVE at the same moment. Each segment of the SWARM is a part of the HIVE, but the HIVE is not a part of the SWARM. Each segment of SWARM needs the HIVE to be a part of a SWARM, but the HIVE does not need the any specific segment of the wave-mass to be a SWARM.

**Resistance among the SWARM: Use the SWAT! Act Alone.**

**Matrix:**

Weaving symbionts creating, moving, offering the permanent revolution of Pandora's code. The Matrix is disequilibrium as invention, aphanisis as informatic-quanta, soft accidents, and action as care. An alien politics of the body as hope. Still the Matrix is sweating in the labor pools of speed production. The matrices are held hostage as the base materialism of Late Captial. Wetware for the endless multi-tasking of choatics. The Matrix is still looming.

**Resistance in The Matrix: Have a Party! Go on Strike!**

**Virus:**

bio-agents flow between complexity and containment, diversity and control, self and other. Cellular circuits know

the difference between antigens and antibodies. Viral coagulation filters for non-self types in the Host in order to assemble possible defensive patterns. Bioagents fail the Host when it meets its other as self. It has no defense against itself, or what mimics its own messages. Bioinformatics understand the self and not the other as self.

### **Resistance within the cell: Make a Vaccine! Stick a needle in a meme!**

#### **Network:**

Borderless operables, hyper redundancy, massive aggregate throughput built on endless backplanes bring bottlenecks down to 0. Decentralized bottom up architectures, mega-gigabit ethernets, and active response firewalls are the multiple nexus of this space. Intelligent infrastructures allow the emergence of total networks, micro-networks, and weak links. Network security is being exploited by the demand for open transnational e-commerce and intercontinental exchange routes. Exploit scripts scan vulnerabilities, replacement files wrap packet filters, stealth sniffers generate new holes: linsniff.c, sunkill.c, and latierra.c. Network gaps created by military-intelligence systems, trans-corporate movement, software developers, end users, providers, and the lack of centralized management clog the possibility of an effective and total security solution.

### **Resistance on the Network: Disconnect! Take the Streets!**

#### **Mayan Hackers/The Inappropriate/d Resistance without Nostalgia (A Note)**

A note was hand delivered to me during a gathering of Radical Media groups in New York City at The Thing (a critical community server) by a network that has been doing advance work on Zapatismo, digital activism, and html democracies.

It was a note from the Lizard Queen:

(Message 445-Ixil /encrypted in the usual manner-con amor.c)

hola cyber/compadre,

Fox is showing reruns of "V", that old Si-fi flick, again. We all sit in the cantina (and watch the only TV in the community: the women, the children, the men, and the drunks).

The Lizard agents are trying to control the world and a few small groups form a global resistance movement. The movie shows the conflicts and tensions between the cells, the danger of staying aboveground, the endless struggle against the growing

technoforce of the Lizard-Power structure. The Lizards are also harvesting the humans for snacks. This not a movie says the one of the kids...plenty of Lizards around here.

The children spend their mornings, after helping with work at home, here at the Center for Mayan Code. Right now they are hacking the past/future binary that has infected the system. Cracking mega\_mythologies has become the latest fun run around here.

Each day the children are recovering more pages from the "stolen book." The cracked Past/Future binary is being woven between tzotzil songs about the Man who "stole the book." The book was produced from the coupling between Mayan and a dog. A Man came and stole the written word, the symbolic support of knowledge for the community. As a consequence of this theft, the Mayans are called ignorant, and the community of the Man proclaim themselves to be "men of reason." The Children laugh and hit the return button.

Each day the imagined community of promised monsters grows, phantoms mix code up, reprogram the impossible, then train others. The problem of temporal fragmentation is getting smaller. A Shared sense of time is our priority now, space is no longer the tool it once was. We must continue to build networks of shared time. The Virtual Class expects Mayan codes to stay in one place and attack from behind a tree, they don't suspect the question of time to be use against them. Who can know what grows in the seeds of time. How goes it in your time?

I finally read that essay you sent about the new military theory (Magen), they seem to have finally read the French. Fractal infrastructures, holistic kill ratios, fatal strategies and the call for a RMA (Revolution in Military Affairs). Question compadre: why is it that only the military and the big companies are allowed to speak of Revolution? While all we can hope for is a disturbance? Perhaps it is time to speak of Zapatismo as a Revolution of Hope. Or Perhaps we should do as the FBI suggested in Computerworld Magazine On their "Back Page" section (page 114) of their April 20 Issue:

\*A group allied with Mexico's Zapatista National Liberation Army is seeking worldwide electronic insurrection on May 10, the FBI said last week. The group urges those sympathetic with the revolutionaries to swamp government and bank computer systems in the U.S. and Mexico via the Internet on that day.\*

World Wide Electronic Insurrection should be our next goal! All we need to do is set a date. Ask all those hackers with heart if they can help with this. Can you also get people to fill the streets of the world? A HUELGA across the arc of realities! Remember

to call for a world that makes all worlds possible.

Well that is all. Make sure that you read this note backwards, it will make more sense then.

con amor y rabia (From the mountains of the Mexican southeast),

The Lizard Queen

P.S. It is clear that in the arena of political action, only he who puts the candle where the wind is blowing will triumph; never the one who pretends the wind is blowing where he puts the candle. Juan de Mairena wrote that bit.

P.S.S. 1998. Mexico. While the supreme government stays on track towards war and tries desperately to join the winds from Wall Street in order to push the heavy sails of the ship of death, these Mexican Mayan, who add the name of Emiliano Zapata to their history, prepare in silence the justice and the dignity that will have to arrive in spite of their death (or perhaps because of it).

In silence, these indigenous watch the skies and the ground to predict the winds from below which run through the fields of Mexico and of the world, through the dusty streets of tiny villages and ranches, through the messy disorder of the popular neighborhoods, through the places of the honest unions, through the offices of the committed political parties, through the theatres-movies-auditoriums-salons-of shows-art galleries, through digital laboratories and centers of scientific investigation, through the university cubicles, classrooms and halls, through meetings and assemblies of political and social organizations, through the churches of the poor, through the international solidarity committees, through the national and foreign non-governmental organizations, through the highways, through the roads, through the neighborhood streets, through the breaches, navigating the rivers, in the lakes and in the seas of this country, today awash in wet, and of this world awakening, late certainly, but awakening.

In silence the Zapatistas see and are seen.

The old nose and pipe wrote this bit. A very good bit. But the children always want more stories about seahorses, mirrors, and lions who eat themselves.

P.S.S.S. Just got an email from one of our friend across the sea. He says we must let the world know that Digital Zapatismo is a Myth. That no one in Chiapas has a T1 line, not one Autonomous Community has a working LAN, or even a good ISP connection. OK. The Zapatistas entered your Networks without any modems. Sometimes we don't even have electricity. As Homer Simpson

said, "We now live in a society where technology makes war as easy as opening a can of Duff beer."

I hope this helps.

P.S.S.S. (The kids say-Hehe...another mega\_mythology cracked! ;-)

P.S.S.S.S. Send more Laptops.

\*\*\*\*\*

SWARM: An ECD Project for ARS Electronica Festival '98

by  
Ricardo Dominguez  
Stefan Wray  
Brett Stalbaum  
Carmin Karasic

1998 Tactical Theater Schedule

Electronic Civil Disobedience

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[ARS Electronica Festival '98](#)



# Towards Bottom-Up Information Warfare Theory and Practice: Version 1.0

by Stefan Wray

August 5, 1998



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- [2.0 Negation of Dominant Information Warfare Conceptions](#)
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## 1.0 Bottom-Up Information Warfare

Bottom-up Information Warfare (BUIW) theory/praxis is needed because dominant IW conceptions are not based on our interests, but on the interests of the corporate-state and its military-intelligence community. Bottom-up IW theory/praxis should *negate* dominant corporate-state/military-intelligence IW theory/praxis and should *affirm* our digital resistant experience and related theory/praxis. Resistance to future war, totally dependent on information and communication technology (ICT), is a useful area for exploration and elaboration of bottom-up IW theory/praxis. Many of today's conflicts verge on future war and current resistance to them provide sites for developing bottom-up IW ideas and practice.

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## 2.0 Negation of Dominant Information Warfare Conceptions

A negation of dominant corporate-state/military-intelligence IW theory should be based on a close examination of the sources of these dominant conceptions, the content and main conclusions, the underlying assumptions and myths, and the context from which IW theory was produced. Primary sources for dominant IW theory/praxis are U.S.

academicians, scholars, and analysts from places like the RAND Corporation, the National Defense University, the U.S. Air Force, other branches of the military, public and private universities, and 'independent' think-tanks. Dominant IW theorists argue that, in today's information society, nations and corporations are increasingly vulnerable to information-based attacks aimed at ICT infrastructure. With the end of the Cold War, the ideology of Information Warfare – often in conjunction with Drug War ideology – provides the state and the military with a new rationale for growth and expansion.

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### **3.0 Affirmation of Resistant Information Warfare Conceptions**

An affirmation of bottom-up Information Warfare theory/praxis means learning who we are, consolidating our own theory/praxis, and recasting dominant myths and assumptions with ones more suited to our interests. So far, bottom-up Information Warfare actors are an international mix of computerized activists, politicized hackers, new media theorists, digital artists, and others at the juncture of computers, media, radical politics, and the arts. The theoretical basis for bottom-up Information Warfare is from a mix of related sources including work on nomadic warfare (Bey; Deleuze and Guattari), on electronic disturbance and civil disobedience (Critical Art Ensemble), on tactical media (Next Five Minutes), and others. Bottom-up IW praxis is not widespread, but one example of incipient work in this area are the Electronic Civil Disobedience actions against the Mexican government that use a device called FloodNet.

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### **4.0 Resistance to Future War**

The Gulf War has been called the first Information War because of the heavy reliance on Information and Communication Technology (ICT) for military and propagandistic purposes. Since the Gulf War such reliance on ICT – on InfoWar technology - has become commonplace for both military conflicts, such as in former Yugoslavia and in southern Mexico, as well as for law enforcement efforts, for example, to control drugs and immigration. For all intents and purposes, future war has arrived and people who resist war today are finding that new means of electronic, digital, or virtual resistance are becoming both possible and necessary. Cyberspatial resistance to future war enables polyspatial hybrid forms of resistance that combine the older rural-agrarian and urban-industrial models of warfare, with the newer cyberspatial-informational forms.

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## 5.0 Global Zapatista Internet Resistance

A current example of hybrid rural, urban, and cyberspacial resistance is the case of the global pro-Zapatista movement, which has demonstrated how the Internet allows non-state actors to build networks of solidarity and resistance across national borders. Immediately after January 1, 1994, the Zapatistas had a strong Internet presence. Through email listservs like Chiapas95, Cc: lists, and an array of interconnected web sites, a global pro-Zapatista movement formed. This year political communication moved toward political action as, for example, the Electronic Disturbance Theater started Electronic Civil Disobedience actions against the Mexican government. Also on several occasions this year, anti-government and pro-Zapatista messages have been placed on Mexican government web sites.

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## 6.0 An Electronic Boston Tea Party

As the Paris Salon is to political communication on the Internet, the Boston Tea Party is to political action; more so it is a metaphor for direct action. Although the bias of Internet politics favors the more passive discursive space of political communication (the salon), things like Electronic Civil Disobedience campaigns against the Mexican government (the tea party) are expanding the range of possibilities. While individuals and small groups have experimented with electronic resistance there is still room for more experimentation and development of techniques and devices. A particularly intriguing idea, that has not been tested, but that has been proposed to Ars Electronica is a proposal for a SWARM, an advanced, multiple source, ECD action happening on different levels and in different spaces, something like a simultaneous convergence of numerous electronic Boston Tea Parties.

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## 7.0 Conclusions

There is a need for an elaboration and an expansion of bottom-up Information Warfare theory/praxis. For this there needs to be a negation of dominant top-down conceptions of Information Warfare and an affirmation of resistant bottom-up conceptions. The sites of resistance to future war are good locations for further thinking and practice of bottom-up Information Warfare. The global pro-Zapatista movement is one site where such experimentation with electronic resistance has taken place. Finally, there needs to be more experimentation and development of electronic techniques and software devices for more advanced electronic civil disobedience.

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## 8.0 Other Work

- [8/1/98](#): Paris Salon or Boston Tea Party? Recasting Electronic Democracy A View From Amsterdam
- [7/7/98](#): Rhizomes, Nomads, and Resistant Internet Use
- [6/17/98](#): The Electronic Disturbance Theater and Electronic Civil Disobedience
- [5/14/98](#): SWARM: An ECD Proposal for Ars Electronica Festival 98
- [5/5/98](#): Die Umwandlung des Widerstands der Maschinenstürmer in Einen Virtuellen Widerstand
- [4/7/98](#): Transforming Luddite Resistance Into Virtual Luddite Resistance
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# Paris Salon or Boston Tea Party?

## Recasting Electronic Democracy, A View from Amsterdam.

by Stefan Wray

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Article written for  
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### Electronic Civil Disobedience

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## Introduction

Do you prefer a Paris Salon or a Boston Tea Party? Would you rather politely discuss - over coffee or wine - the important political issues of the day? Or would you rather physically take action and actually intervene in the political process? Are you a theoretician or a practitioner? These may be old questions, but when considered alongside today's digital, virtual, and electronic environments and social spaces, these questions pose new problems.

This paper argues that today's cyber-cultures and cyber-politics are biased toward the more discursive and dialogic Habermasian Paris Salon model of electronic democracy and that the more active and direct Boston Tea Party model of electronic democracy is largely ignored by more 'legitimate' actors. It seems this is the dominant case within the discourse of both grassroots new media activists and academicians and scholars who study and write about new media, and especially about electronic democracy.

The first part of this piece suggests that in addition to the coffee house and salon metaphor and mythology around the genesis of the public sphere, that it may be as valid to consider the Boston Tea Party metaphor. Dominant and marginal conceptions of electronic democracy are presented as examples. The next part glances at Amsterdam's new media in terms of political communication and political action after situating itself in its political and media contexts. Finally, based on some of the lessons learned from the Amsterdam experience with electronic democracy some ideas are recast for further deliberation about ways to move forward to a more hybrid Net politics.

One major point of this writing is that standard theoretical conceptions of electronic democracy are too narrowly defined. There needs to be an expansion of the theory and practice of electronic democracy such that it reflects more the reality of actual and physical democratic action. Just as there must be electronic discussions, there must also be electronic rallies, protests, marches, and sit-ins. And maybe there are situations in which an electronic Boston Tea Party would be called for.

### **Paris Salon or Boston Tea Party as the Basis for Electronic Democracy** *Paris Salon*

Within the current communication, and more so political communication, discourse around the public sphere - or "sphericules" as some would say [1] - it is somewhat fashionable to invoke Habermasian understandings of the rise of early capitalism and the social space it created for discussions and debates to take place. Common sites for these face-to-face engagements among people were the coffee houses and salons of Europe and colonial America. A fairly standard rendition of this development and emergence of political space that allowed for the establishment of democracies is provided in Curran and Gurevitch's work *Mass Media and Society*. [2]

*The economic independence provided by private property, the critical reflection fostered by letters and novels, the flowering of discussion in*

*coffee houses and salons and, above all, the emergence of independent, market-based press, created a new public engaged in critical political discussions. [3]*

The general idea is that in such physical spaces - coffee house and salons - a new class, the burgeoning bourgeois of that time, was able to reflect upon pressing issues of social, economic, and political importance and that from these discussions and debates emerged the seeds of new democratic states in France, America, and elsewhere. These early coffee houses and salons still offer a powerful mythology and metaphor which survives in to today's virtual, digital, or electronic social spaces on the Internet.

Of course the Harbermasian notion of the public sphere is not without critics. Valerie Frissen, an associate professor of Media Studies at the University of Amsterdam questions reliance on Habermas' model. [4] In a recent lecture at the university, Frissen suggested that Habermas' emphasis on rational discourse was too narrow and that there is indeed good reason to include types of minor or marginal discourse within the confines of the public sphere that would be perhaps be called a feminist public sphere or maybe a post-modern public sphere, one in which a "kaleidoscope" of discourses exist in unison and not solely the more temperate and moderate social space more often visited by men of a privileged nature.

One might, however, extend Frissen's critique even more by re-examining the notion of the coffee house and salon as the site of genesis for modern democracy. Perhaps by invoking another potentially powerful mythology and metaphor, the discourse on the public sphere will move to other realms.

#### *Boston Tea Party*

What if, rather than looking at the relatively polite rational and reasonable sites of early capital's coffee houses and salons as a generative arena for the public sphere and current conceptions of electronic democracy, we instead look at the more impolite, irrational, and unreasonable act embodied in the Boston Tea Party? What happens when we include the mythology and metaphor of the Boston Tea Party in the discourse on electronic democracy?

One thing that inclusion of the Boston Tea Party metaphor surely does is that it moves electronic democracy from being defined within the confines of political communication (debate, discussion, dialogue) and widens the frame to also include also political action, and in particular extra-parliamentarian, non-electoral forms of direct action. When we consider the history of democracy and democratic actions in full, we are limited if we do not deal with both political communication and political action. For this reason, the Boston Tea Party is an important site for generating ideas about electronic democracy, and more so electronic democratic or electronic mass action. A brief description of the Boston Tea Party may be useful for those unfamiliar with colonial U.S. history. The specific actions taken were in response to the British Tea Act of 1773 which angered colonial merchants and mobilised many people.

*Various colonies made plans to prevent the East India Company from landing its cargoes in colonial ports. In ports other than Boston, agents of*

*the company were "persuaded" to resign, and new shipments of tea were either returned to England or warehoused. In Boston, the agents refused to resign and, with the support of the royal governor, preparations were made to land incoming cargoes regardless of opposition. After failing to turn back the three ships in the harbor, local patriots led by Samuel Adams staged a spectacular drama. On the evening of December 16, 1773, three companies of fifty men each, masquerading as Mohawk Indians, passed through a tremendous crowd of spectators, went aboard the three ships, broke open the tea chests, and heaved them into the harbor. As the electrifying news of the Boston "tea party" spread, other seaports followed the example and staged similar acts of resistance of their own. [5]*

The political act of the Boston Tea Party occurred on the eve of the American Revolution and was an important moment that further galvanised popular opposition to the British monarchy. This rebellious act, along with many others, was part of the political process toward greater democratisation. Just as the coffee houses and salons provided the social space for greater political communication, acts like the Boston Tea Party opened up social space for greater political action and then revolution. Today we can imagine, and have to some degree experienced, the digital or virtual salon, but what might a digital, electronic, or virtual Boston Tea Party look like? And under what circumstances would its application be politically valid?

*Dominant Conceptions of Electronic Democracy*

It is safe to say that the vast majority - or nearly all - of the literature on electronic democracy is written from the narrower perspective of political communication that privileges rational debate and discourse over irrational action - like the Boston Tea Party. Electronic democracy as direct electronic political action is largely ignored. From the early work of American scholars (1980s) to the contemporary work of European scholars the model pursued is rooted in or is some variant of the Habermasian "universal communicative community." [6]

A survey of very recent European scholarship - British, Dutch, and German - demonstrates that new thinking in Europe on the subject of electronic democracy is not really so new but more of a reshaping of earlier American work on the subject. Electronic democracy is still being described with the frame of political communication. [7] Granted, each of these authors presents valuable contributions from within the scope of political communication. Barnett, for example, drawing on experiences in the UK argues that while political discourse on the Internet provides numerous opportunities for marginalized groups, the more traditional mass media will continue to dominate as a site for political debate. [8] Malinas and Jankowski use empirical data from studying a computer network in Scotland to test hypotheses on "virtual democracy" and "urban entrepreneurialism." [9] Schmidtko in describing Berlin's digital political culture contrasts top-down and bottom-up means of communicating. [10] And finally, Street, in challenging conceptions of electronic democracy by providing both the standard arguments in favour as well as his and other arguments against, calls in to question precisely what form of democracy we are or should be talking about. [11]

The problem with the work of these scholars, and with most of the writing on electronic democracy, is still - as stated already - that it stays within the boundaries of political communication and rarely if ever strays into the terrain of political action, and most definitely does not wander far afield into extra-parliamentarian and non-electoral forms of direct action politics. The dominant view still being put forth is that the Internet is exclusively a site for communication. Few, if any, scholars are suggesting that the Internet infrastructure itself can be a site or target for political action. No one is talking about a cyberspatial Boston Tea Party, where, perhaps, instead of dumping tea to protest the policies of an imperial power, cyber-activists might dump data or engage in some other form of direct action on the Internet.

*Marginal Conceptions of Electronic Democracy*

To discover scholarly - and not so scholarly - work on electronic democracy that explores the subject from outside of the bounds of traditional political communication frames, one has to look outside of the communications field. Two sites for development of ideas as to how the Internet provides avenues for electronic political action of an extraparlamentarian and direct nature are the areas of Information Warfare and that of Electronic Civil Disobedience.

The literature on Information Warfare primarily has been developed by scholars and academicians either working within or working for the U.S. military-intelligence apparatus, as well as other authors who write on matters of network security and related issues. [12] Key within this entire genre is the work of Arquilla and Ronfeldt who together in 1993 published their now often referenced "Cyberwar is coming!" [13] The main point of their argument and of subsequent work is that networked computer systems have become vulnerable points for attack by hostile forces and that steps should be taken to prevent or reduce the chances of information warfare, netwar, or cyberwar. Much of this literature is of a gloom and doom variety and is clearly written from the point-of-view of the State and of corporations, those who have the most to lose by people beginning to address their grievances by taking action on cyberspatial networks.

Electronic Civil Disobedience is a domain that has less adherents and scholarship than does Information Warfare theory. This is probably due to the fact that it is a reshaping of Information Warfare theory from a more grassroots, anti-State, and anti-corporate perspective, hence there are less people and less resources devoted to this subject. But it is the theory and practice of Electronic Civil Disobedience that does begin to answer the question of what a virtual or digital Boston Tea Party might look like. [14] So far, the theory of ECD has stated that it is borrowing the notions of trespass and blockade from traditional civil disobedience tactics and applying these tactics to the Internet infrastructure. Blockading or jamming up web sites of political opponents is the current practice of Electronic Civil Disobedience undertaken this year.

This paper will now turn its attention to the specific case of Amsterdam and then return to these issues of electronic democracy as defined by both political communication and political action on the Internet. Moreover it will argue that the Paris Salon model of electronic democracy - the purview of political

communication – needs to be expanded to include the Boston Tea Party model of electronic democracy – the purview of political action – for a fuller and more complete theory and practice of electronic democracy.

## **Amsterdam: Cyber-City of Europe**

### *Political Context*

To understand current experimentation with electronic democracy in Holland and particularly in Amsterdam it is useful to have a sense of the political context out of which electronic democracy evolved. In general there are two inter-related histories of politics in Dutch society. The first traditional form of politics is the domain of the political parties and the second non-traditional form is the domain of grassroots social movements. Prior to the 1960s party politics held sway. Since the 1970s there has been a tendency toward greater political participation in social movements and single-issue politics. And in the 1990s, perhaps a synthesis or symbiosis exists between both forms.

An unusual characteristic of Dutch society that had a strong bearing on the creation and maintenance of political parties in early periods is the process known as pillarization. In a recent lecture at the University of Amsterdam, professor Kees Brants described the four main pillars of the Catholics, the Protestants, the Liberals, and the Socialists. [15] From cradle to grave, these pillars, or segmented enclaves, formed the basis for participation in Dutch society at the level of school, employment, political participation, and even media usage. A pillar is, or was rather, a tight knit community that very much kept to itself. There was little cross-fertilisation among members of different pillars.

In the 1960s the era of pillarization began to come to a close. There are not single reasons why depillarization began, but it is thought that in general the tumultuous period the late 1960s and the student movements of that time played a key role. [16] While the pillars were characterised as being vertical, hierarchical, governmental and static, or arbolic, to use a term from Deleuze and Guattari, the new social movements, for the most part, have been more horizontal, non-hierarchical, non-governmental, fluid, or rhizomatic, again borrowing Deleuze and Guattari's term. [17]

Today there are four major political parties in Holland that continuously form a coalition government. No one party dominates, so there is always a need for consensus and compromise. [18] It is difficult to say which social movements are strong today. In the 1980s the squatters, feminists, ecologists, and pirate radio adherents were a strong force, but their influence has diminished in the 1990s. But their presence is still felt today in Amsterdam's cyber-cultures and cyber-politics.

### *Media Context*

Historically, at least during the period of pillarization from the time of World War I until the 1960s, media in Holland was very much organised around the different pillars. Each pillar - Protestant, Catholic, Liberal, and Socialist - more or less had its own press, then radio and finally television station. For example, the newspaper De Volkskrant was originally a mouthpiece for the Catholic pillar, while the newspaper NRC Handelsblad had been traditionally associated



with the Liberal pillar. Public broadcasting represented a similar differentiation along political or religious lines. "This meant a complicated arrangement of originally five (and now seven) different public broadcasting organisations, each representing religious, political, or social groups in the country." [19]

Depillarization meant more cross-fertilisation of ideas. For the press and other media this meant the beginning of a move away from strict adherence to particular religious or political persuasions. The 1970s saw rise of two phenomena that are important in shaping today's new media environment. The first was the onset of cable television networks which by now have penetration rates hovering at around 90%. [20] The growth of cable, the emergence of Holland as a densely cabled country is one of the factors shaping today's new media environment. The second area of importance for new media development was pirate radio. In the 1970s and 1980s "thousands of illegal" stations sprung up. [21] Pirate radio, or low-watt unlicensed radio broadcasting, helped to set a tone for a more free-thinking and independent media, a necessary condition for an independent Internet political culture.

But it was of course the Dutch hackers and proponents of electronic bulletin board systems (BBSs) in the late 1980s and early 1990s who are credited by both Dutch academicians [22] and more grassroots Dutch media activists [23] as being the important precursors to the current new media environment in Holland. It was the convergence of forces from a network of hackers called HackTic and elements from an Amsterdam cultural center called De Balie, that together with initial support from the city of Amsterdam, formed the now well-known model of the Digital City or in Dutch, De Digitale Stad (DDS). Since opening its "doors" on January 15, 1994, the Digital City, along with XS4ALL, an ISP that grew out of HackTic, and a group called the Society for Old and New Media form an important cluster of Amsterdam new media institutions. [24]

#### *New Media and Political Communication*

Part of the genesis of the Digital City, one of its *raison d'être*, was a perceived "crisis in democracy" in Dutch society, a "crisis" marked by continual decreases in voter turn-out, a move away from the political party as venue for expressing one's political will and a move toward the single issue politics of social movements, as well as a move toward a general cynicism about politics altogether. [25] Among the initial claims of DDS was that it would become a space for "various members of the city council and other political representatives" to discuss with the public and with "citizens" important issues of the day. [26]

But this initial euphoric idealism has given way to more pragmatic realism. For all intents and purposes the Digital City has not become a venue for politicians. Nina Meilof of DDS said in a recent presentation at the University of Amsterdam that politicians simply do not like to participate in the types of interactive forums found on the Internet. [27] Lovink and Riemens are a little more caustic, but perhaps on the mark, in their analysis: "politicians were neither able nor willing to familiarise themselves with the new medium, as efforts made in the beginning of the DDS to bring them on-line and start a dialogue with their constituents proved a waste of time. And the citizens were far more interested in dialoguing among themselves than to engage in arcane discussions with

close-minded politicians.” [28] It is quite likely that the horizontal, non-linear, rhizomatic nature of the Internet is simply not a good match with the more vertical, linear, and rigid style of politicians.

To the contrary, Nina Meilof, as well as Niesco Dubbelboer of Amsterdam’s Agora project, point to numerous examples of social movement or grassroots use of the Internet. [29] The two say that various types of interactive Internet discussion spaces have been successfully used by communities and neighbourhoods in Amsterdam to discuss a range of issues from figuring out the most appropriate way to allocate funds designated for a specific neighbourhood, to generating concern over expansion plans for Amsterdam’s Schipol airport, to organising opposition to destruction of a long-term squatted island called Ruigoord. [30]

One of the more interesting applications of the Net to Amsterdam’s social movement politics was in June of 1997 when Amsterdam played host to a major meeting of the European Union. Meilof said the level of heightened security meant that “Amsterdam became almost a police state.” She also said:

*There was this web site called contrast.org and they kind of made a big protest site. And you could even see that all the media were looking at them and that even the police were looking at this site to see if there were any demonstrations, any kind of scary actions going on. And actually it did have quite a good role during the Top, although half of the people working on the web site were arrested . . . [31]*

### *New Media and Political Action*

The example of contrast.org’s web site during the June 1997 Europe Union meeting in Amsterdam is a good starting point for further examination of the use of new media to support political action that falls well outside of the range of parliamentary or electoral forms of politics. The type of oppositional street politics for which the contrast.org site was established has strong roots in Amsterdam throughout the 1970s and 1980s. The squatting movement in Holland, and in Amsterdam in particular, produced a more confrontational style of direct action street politics. The 1980s also saw the emergence of a strong anti-Shell movement that was directed toward Shell’s involvement in South Africa. The more radical elements within the anti-Shell movement engaged in such acts as sabotage of Shell stations. Pirate radio and other media forms like zines or pamphlets played a communicative role for Holland’s action oriented politics of the 1980s. Today, there has been an evident lessening of this type of radical politics, but the example of contrast.org is indicative of potential use of new media in a way that moves well beyond the discursive and dialogic model of most examples of electronic democracy.

There exist several theoretical sites where understandings of new media and political action are being formed. One needs only first to look at the work of Geert Lovink et al. This group of Amsterdam grassroots media activists has hosted two important new media conferences called The Next Five Minutes in 1993 and in 1996, with the next set to take place in March of 1999. [32] From this nexus further thinking around the notions of tactical media are taking shape.

[33]

*Tactical media are media of crisis, criticism and opposition. This is both the source of their power, ("anger is an energy": John Lydon), and also their limitation. Their typical heroes are; the activist, Nomadic media warriors, the praxter, the hacker, the street rapper, the camcorder kamikaze, they are happy negatives always in search of an enemy. [34]*

Discussions on and elaboration of notions of tactical media are, of course, not limited to taking place in Amsterdam, or in Holland. But Amsterdam has become a key node in an international network of media activists who are more and more inclined to think of what they do as being tactical media. Through the conferences of the Next Five Minutes and more importantly - or rather more regularly - through an Internet discussion list called nettime, [35] largely but not exclusively managed by Dutch media activists, Amsterdam has situated itself as an important site for the application of new media to political action that goes beyond normal channels and that clearly exists outside of the realm of the academy and of traditional politics.

### **Recasting Electronic Democracy**

#### *Amsterdam Lessons*

In returning to the initial set of theoretical questions raised by positing the Boston Tea Party model of electronic democracy as an alternative to or as a way of expanding the Paris Salon model of electronic democracy, what lessons can be drawn from the Amsterdam experience of cyber-culture and cyber-politics? First of all, it seems that the original set of social actors who formed groups like HackTic or De Balie, along with the others who entered the Nets after being involved in social movement political experience in the 1980s - i.e. those who now shape groups like the Digital City, XS4ALL, and the Society for Old and New Media - it seems that these people may have at one point operated more out of a Boston Tea Party political ethic. But these earlier proponents of more direct forms of social movement politics were somehow seduced by the lure of the Internet and began to veer from the Boston Tea Party model and aim more toward the discursive, dialogic model of the Paris Salon. This claim could be an overstatement or an ill informed generalisation, but it seems that grains or elements of this being true are present.

Clearly, the discourse or even the mythology of the Digital City project is one largely built up around Habermasian notions of the public sphere. Of this there can be little doubt. This interest in using the Internet as a social space to revitalise communication between the public and public leaders, this notion of bridging the gap, and responding to a "crisis" in democracy, is firmly within the realm of the Paris Salon model of electronic democracy. But even so, this part of the experiment seems to have failed, or at least has not met up with the grand expectations being thrust forth at the beginning.

The horizontal, non-linear, rhizomatic nature of the Internet has meant that its use is more conducive for social movements or others who are organised more along those structural lines. Social movement discursive and dialogic Internet use does not appear to be entirely bound to the Paris Salon model as the experience of contrast.org shows. This experience demonstrates the possibilities

of hybridity that combine action on the street with action on the Net. [36]  
Finally, it is this sort of Internet usage that fuels the interest of tactical media proponents. Maybe in the end, it is within the social and political spaces created by tactical media advocates that the Boston Tea Party model has more breathing room and resonance.

### *Expanding Electronic Democracy*

One sound reason for expanding the theoretical and practical basis of electronic democracy beyond the limiting confines of the Habermasian Paris Salon model is that in the non-digital world this rational discursive public sphere only represents a fraction of the available avenues for the occurrence of democratic action. In the real world - in Amsterdam and elsewhere - democratic actions include: mass meetings, pickets, rallies, protests, marches, sit-ins, occupations, blockades, minor disturbances, civic unrest, riots, and even sabotage - like the Boston Tea Party. The Vietnam War did not end because people were engaged in quiet rational dialogue in the public sphere. Political change, democratic change, does not happen solely through public discourse. Recent events in Indonesia should make that transparent. Therefore, it seems that any theory and practice of electronic democracy needs to entertain these various forms of democratic action and begin to conceptualise and operationalize the means by which such non-discursive actions can begin to appear in digital, virtual, or electronic form.

Another reason for expanding the boundaries of what constitutes electronic democratic action is that the current dialogic Paris Salon model is in effect a way to coopt the more chaotic and dispersive energy of social movement politics. How else could attempts for dialogue, negotiation, and consensus with the State be seen? Seeking dialogue with local city officials, with members of government, with representatives of the State is a way to diffuse or squelch more incendiary positions. It is a way to put water onto a fire.

The relationship between the public and the State in Holland is quite different than it is in the United States, and in places like Texas where there is a strong anti-Federal government antagonism, but even so, in a generalizable way, we can say that attempts to negotiate, discuss, and reach consensus with government is quite a different form of political expression than one of direct confrontation. Maybe the experiment of the Digital City in this regard of acting as a negotiating or consensual forum has failed and that now it mainly thrives as a space for people-to-people discussion. But still, the overarching mentality of this Habermasian dialogic model is one in which it is difficult to break out of to entertain more confrontational methods. By injecting the theoretical underpinnings of electronic democracy with a good dose of Boston Tea Party fervour, perhaps the sedentary discursive elements within the various cyber-salons can be provoked to more nomadic warrior behaviour, seeing the Net as more than a means to speak, but also as a way for action. [37]

### *Electronic Boston Tea Party*

What might an electronic Boston Tea Party look like? If we adopt the Boston Tea Party metaphor in a strict sense then we might be looking for examples of actual dumping, for what the Tea Party originally did was dump tea from ships into the harbour. When applied to the digital world, dumping of information, a data dump, an erasure of information, would be a strict interpretation of this

metaphor. However, it seems that the metaphor can be applied a little more loosely than that and can be used more as a metaphor for direct action. In the narrower sense of pure dumping there surely have been cases of hackers entering computers and erasing or dumping data into the trash. But for the broader sense of the Boston Tea Party serving as a metaphor for generalised direct action on the Internet, there have been numerous examples.

A recent case clearly stands out. In May of this year, in what has been called the largest hack of its kind, a young anti-nuclear hacker simply known as "JF" placed anti-nuclear images and texts on over 300 web sites around the world. [38] This tactic of entering web sites to erase, add, or change information is one that has also been used against the Mexican government by supporters of Mexico's Zapatistas. [39] Less dramatic, and probably much less illegal, acts against the Mexican government have been being carried out by a group called the Electronic Disturbance Theater. The EDT group has been developing tactics of Electronic Civil Disobedience, in particular it has devised a software tool it calls FloodNet as a means to allow mass participation in collective and simultaneous web site blockades. [40] These forms of actions against web sites have been called "virtual sit-ins." [41] There has also been a group in Mexico that organised a "virtual march" against the Mexican government. [42]

The kinds of Internet direct actions that have taken place so far, especially those that attempt to involve mass participation as opposed to the more solitary attacks of the lone hacker, seem to be in still an early stage of development. What we are mostly seeing are experiments. There is also a lack of theoretical work to describe, explain, and frame this sort of new Internet activity. The Critical Art Ensemble's *The Electronic Disturbance* and *Electronic Civil Disobedience* are two short works that clearly stand out among the few works of this sort. [43] The Critical Art Ensemble, the Electronic Disturbance Theater, tactical media groups, and others developing bottom-up Information Warfare theory, such as those preparing for the Ars Electronica Festival on InfoWar, are sites to locate the incipient electronic Boston Tea Party. [44]

#### *Toward Hybrid Net Politics*

To reiterate a point, current conceptions of electronic democracy are too narrowly defined with the frame of the Habermasian Paris Salon model of dialogue and discourse. Missing from this narrow conception of electronic democracy are democratic forms of direct action that have historically been important in numerous countries throughout the world when there have been times of democratic social change. Democracy is about more than polite, rational, and reasonable discourse among polite, rational, and reasonable social actors. There are times when irrational and impolite actions are warranted. Therefore, as we see in Table 1 below, the frame of electronic democracy must expand to also include the Boston Tea Party model.

**Table 1.**

	<b>Paris Salon Model</b>	<b>Boston Tea Party Model</b>
<b>Virtual, Electronic</b>	Internet Debate	Electronic Civil Disobedience
<b>Real, Physical</b>	Town Hall Meeting	Street Action

So the issue is not an either/or proposition. It should not be a question as to whether the Paris Salon model is preferable to the Boston Tea Party model, or whether real and physical actions are preferable to virtual and electronic actions. The point here is that all four of these forms, as presented in Table 1, are all valid and worth pursuing both in terms of actual practice as well as in theoretical terms.

Clearly within the communications field, and even with the subfields of political communication or computer-mediated communication, the bias has been toward the virtual or electronic Paris Salon model. This need not be the case. And it is the hope of this work that all of these above-mentioned forms will begin to given equal weight and equal treatment. But one can not be so naive as to presume that any time soon communication scholars and academicians who are studying electronic democracy will move beyond the more traditional and conservative Habermasian public sphere. After all, the major science, the dominant discourse within the communication field is one that supports the status quo and one that supports the state and government. The Boston Tea Party, even though a pivotal moment in the development of modern democratic societies is still much too radical for most communication scholars today.

### Conclusions

One thing not addressed in this article is the question as to when it would be politically valid to host an electronic Boston Tea Party; when is it legitimate to practice direct action on the Internet? This is obviously a question that requires considerable more time than allowed for in this short piece, because it is one that raises quite a range of possible responses. Some, clearly, will argue direct action on the Internet is never justifiable, while others will suggest direct action every day. In addition, the answer to this question depends on the political context; it depends on the country or government within which or against which one is acting. A possible way to address this question is to ask under what conditions might have Internet direct action been justifiable in the past. In this decade, the Gulf War stands out as a good example. Although short-lived, resistance to the Gulf War from within the United States was fairly militant. Throughout the country there were, of course, rallies, marches, and protests, but there were also occupations of army recruiting stations, bridge and highway take-overs, and in some cases riots. In San Francisco, for the first three days after the U.S. military forces started to bomb Iraq, the protesters and not the police were in control of the streets.

During the build-up to the Gulf War – from August 1990 to January 1991 – the Internet, in particular political nets like PeaceNet, was used to communicate information about opposition to that war, but there were little or no signs of people using the Internet infrastructure as a site for action. If there were another

Gulf War, or another U.S. interventionist war in the near future that prompted as a dramatic and quick domestic resistance within the United States, then it seems likely that more militant and direct actions on the Internet would occur, parallel to whatever actions were taking place in the streets. So it seems we might conclude that one site for future application of Internet direct action would be in response to future U.S. interventionist wars. But this is just one example, one possibility. Nevertheless, entertaining possible electronic, digital, or virtual resistance to future wars may in fact be one avenue for furthering the development of bottom-up Information Warfare theory. It seems like one direction that electronic democracy theorists and practitioners might find useful to explore.

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### End Notes

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11. Street, John. 1997. "Remote Control? Politics, Technology, and 'Electronic Democracy'," *European Journal of Communication*, Vol. 12 (1): 27-42.
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13. Arquilla, John and David Ronfeldt. 1993. "Cyberwar is Coming!" *Comparative Strategy* 12 (April-June): 141-65. For a version of this article in a gopher site, see: <http://gopher.well.sf.ca.us:70/0/Military/cyberwar>
14. Refer to a web site devoted to the theory and practice of Electronic Civil Disobedience. See: <http://www.nyu.edu/projects/wray/ecd.html>
15. Kees Brants, Associate Professor at the Department of Communication Science, University of Amsterdam and Director of the MA-Program on European Communication Studies, gave the opening presentation of a week long seminar called "Communication, Community, and Democracy" at the University of Amsterdam, from July 12 to 18.
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24. See: De Digitale Stad, <http://www.dds.nl>; XS4ALL, <http://www.xs4all.nl>; and Society for Old and New Media at De Waag, <http://www.waag.org>

25. Kees Brants in lecture at the University of Amsterdam on July 13, 1998 emphasizes the point several times or there being a "crisis" in democracy.

26. Anon. 1994. The Digital City (De Digitale Stad). News release dated January 3, 1994 from DDS.

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29. Niesco Dubbelboer, Director of Agora Europa and Policy Advisor to the Amsterdam Municipality, gave a lecture on "ICT and Amsterdam: a Marriage de Raison?," at the University of Amsterdam on July 15, 1998.

30. The opposition at Ruigoord presented their story in comic strip form on their web site. See: <http://www.contrast.org/groenoord/>

31. Nina Meilof of De Digitale Stad in a lecture on "Reversed Politics," at the University of Amsterdam on July 16, 1998. For the group Contrast see <http://www.contast.org> and for their specific use of the web site during the Amsterdam European Union meeting in June 1997. See: <http://www.contrast.org/eurostop/>

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37. For more on rhizomatic and nomadic Internet resistance see Wray, Stefan. 1998. "Rhizomes, Nomads, and Resistant Internet Use." <http://www.nyu.edu/projects/wray/RhizNom.html>
38. See <http://www.antonline.com> for a complete listing of the activities of "JF" and the group Milworm.
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40. See Wray, Stefan. 1998. The Electronic Disturbance Theater and Electronic Civil Disobedience, <http://www.nyu.edu/projects/wray/EDTECD.html> for an explanation of FloodNet.
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# **The Electronic Disturbance Theater and Electronic Civil Disobedience**

by Stefan Wray on June 17, 1998

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## **The Electronic Disturbance Theater**

The Electronic Disturbance Theater (EDT) is a small group of cyber activists and artists engaged in developing the theory and practice of Electronic Civil Disobedience (ECD). Until now the group has focused its electronic actions against the Mexican and U.S. governments to draw attention to the war being waged against the Zapatistas and others in Mexico. But ECD tactics have potential application by a range of political and artistic movements. The Electronic Disturbance Theater, working at the intersections of radical politics, recombinant and performance art, and computer software design, has produced an ECD device called Flood Net, URL based software used to flood and block an opponent's web site. While at present a catalyst for moving forward with ECD tactics, the Electronic Disturbance Theater hopes to eventually blend into the background to become one of many small autonomous groups heightening and enhancing the ways and means of computerized resistance.

## **Electronic Civil Disobedience ([see longer article](#))**

Acting in the tradition of non-violent direct action and civil disobedience, proponents of Electronic Civil Disobedience are borrowing the tactics of trespass and blockade from these earlier social movements and are applying them to the Internet. A typical civil disobedience tactic has been for a group of people to physically blockade, with their bodies, the entranceways of an opponent's office or building or to physically occupy an opponent's office – to have a sit-in. Electronic Civil Disobedience, as a form of mass decentered electronic direct action, utilizes virtual blockades and virtual sit-ins. Unlike the participant in a traditional civil disobedience action, an ECD actor can participate in virtual blockades and sit-ins from home, from work, from the university, or from other points of access to the Net. Further, the ECD actor can act against an opponent that is hundreds if not thousands of miles away. The Electronic Disturbance Theater, primarily through its Flood Net device, is promoting ways to engage in global, mass, collective and simultaneous Electronic Civil Disobedience and direct action.

## Digital Zapatismo (see longer article)

The Zapatistas in Chiapas, Mexico, immediately entered the global stage just after January 1, 1994 when their communiqués signed by Subcomandante Marcos were distributed across the world through the Net. Quickly, through pre-existing and newly formed listservs, newsgroups, and Cc: lists, news, reports, analyses, announcements about demonstrations, and calls for intercontinental gatherings spread throughout the Americas, Europe, Asia, Africa, and Australia. We began to hear the Zapatistas use the terms intercontinental “networks of struggle” and “networks of resistance.” This new media, the Internet, became a vital means for the transmission of information from inside the conflict zone in Chiapas to other points of resistance in Mexico and to points beyond Mexico’s physical borders. Until recently the primary use of the Internet by the global pro-Zapatista movement has been as a communication tool. However, in recent times, particularly since the Acteal Massacre in Chiapas at the end of last year, the Internet has increasingly been seen as not only a site or a channel for communication, but also as a site for direct action and a site for Electronic Civil Disobedience. The Electronic Disturbance Theater, through its promotion of ECD tactics vis a vis the pro-Zapatista movement, is pushing the envelope and is challenging the notion that the Internet should be safeguarded solely as a site for communication; it should be a site for direct action as well.

## FloodNet

In January of this year, a group from Italy, the Anonymous Digital Coalition, circulated a proposal through the Zapatista networks for a virtual sit-in to take place on five web sites of Mexico City financial institutions. Their suggested method was for many people to be simultaneously, and note manually, striking the reload key of the targeted web sites on the theory that if enough people participated in this action, that these web sites could be effectively blockaded. Based on this theory of simultaneous and collective, yet decentered, electronic action against a targeted web site, the group that became the Electronic Disturbance Theater automated the process of manually striking the reload key repeatedly. On April 10, Flood Net Tactical Version 1.0 was showcased during a dress rehearsal action of Electronic Civil Disobedience against Mexican President Zedillo’s web site. As a Java applet reload function, the first test of Flood Net sent an automated reload request every seven seconds to Zedillo’s page. Reports from participants and our observations confirmed that the more than 8,000 participants in this first Flood Net action intermittently blocked access to the Zedillo site on that day. The next site for electronic action was the Clinton White House web site on May 10. A similar Flood Net device was deployed. Instead of reload requests being sent every 7 seconds that figure was cut to every 3. But due to using 5 mirror sites, most of which did not have counters on them, we do not have an accurate account of the participant’s numbers. And due to lack of reports about White House web site blockage and an assumption that the White House page exists on a much larger computer than the Zedillo page, it seems that the Clinton web site was not effectively blocked on May 10.

## Mexico Government Strikes Back

To protest the increased deportation of international human rights observers and to again demonstrate the ability of people physically outside Mexico's geographic borders to act against an agency of the Mexican government, the Electronic Disturbance Theater chose Mexico's Secretaria de Gobernacion for its June 10 ECD action. This governmental department oversees Mexico's immigration service and is directly responsible for the deportation of international observers. Gobernacion also oversees Mexico's federal public security forces that have been working in conjunction with the military against Zapatista communities in Chiapas. As on April 10 and May 10, ECD on June 10 against the Gobernacion web site used a version of Flood Net. But this time, something curious happened. The Mexican government struck back. The Mexican Government or programmers hired by the government developed a countermeasure against Flood Net. The Electronic Disturbance Theater believes the following is what happened. A Java script was placed in the Secretaria de Gobernacion's web site that was designed to activate whenever Flood Net was directed toward it. Upon activation, the Gobernacion site would open window after window on the Flood Net users browser. If the Flood Net user remained connected long enough, their browser, whether it be Netscape or Explorer, could crash. As of this writing EDT software designers are working to correct the problem in an attempt to make this sort of countermeasure in future actions ineffective.

## Future Directions

In its short lived history, the Electronic Disturbance Theater has demonstrated the capability to take action against portions of a political opponent's Internet infrastructure. While at the same it has shown that its actions are of such a scale that they warrant state reaction and intervention, at least on the part of the Mexican government. The Electronic Disturbance Theater will continue to grow and move beyond tactics such as Flood Net. Eventually, tactical devices like Flood Net will just be one potential tool out of an array of electronic machines and software devices that cyber activists and artists will have access to and know how to use. We hope that soon, the Electronic Disturbance Theater becomes only one small group among a multiplicity of small groups, nodes, or cells, that push forward the ways and means for global electronic resistance to occur. We are already involved at the international level. This September's Ars Electronica Festival in Linz, Austria, an annual festival celebrating the juncture of arts and technology, will focus on Infowar and has already accepted our SWARM proposal. Think of a swarm as an array of Flood Net-like devices, arising, acting, and dispersing simultaneously against an array of cyberspacial political targets. If the electronic pulses generated by our Flood Net actions are represented by a small mountain stream, the electronic pulses generated by a swarm of convergent ECD actions are a raging torrent. We invite you to participate in, to help us promote, and to create new forms of Electronic Civil Disobedience.





# SWARM: An ECD Project for ARS Electronica Festival '98

by  
Ricardo Dominguez  
Stefan Wray  
Brett Beestal  
Osea

[rdom@thing.net](mailto:rdom@thing.net)  
<http://www.thing.net/~rdom>

ARS Electronica Festival '98

\*The information revolution is the key to the development of new designs and capabilities for sustainable swarming--from the establishment of an initial posture of dispersed forces, to the coalescing of those forces for an attack, to their dissevering return to the safety of wide dispersion, and their preparation for a new pulse. Only a new generation of robust information gathering and distribution systems can support such pulsing.\*  
--In Athena's Camp

## 1.1 Digital Zapatismo as InfoSwarm Systems.

The Zapatista movement in Chiapas, without benefit of any technological infrastructure, has been able to manifest it self as a transnational network of email based activism that has constrained the Mexican Government from crushing them immediately. The advent of these networks has up to now been able to do the work that is needed--to spread information about the situation in Chiapas on a mass scale. This continues to be the most vital element of Zapatismo on-line.

Digital Zapatismo is now concentrating on replacing the InfoWar doctrine of cyber-terrorism by pushing Electronic Civil Disobedience to the forefront of mass media discussion. This will be the main thread of the project within the INFOWAR list.

## 1.2 Electronic Pulse Systems.

Digital Zapatimo calls all individuals and groups to participate in research and development of new methods of Electronic Civil Disobedience

that move beyond email lists and information sites.

This investigation should focus on non-violent Electronic Pulse Systems (EPS), that function beyond the Tactical Flood Nets that we have already built (<http://www.thing.net/~rdom/zapsTactical/zaps.html>), that will enable mass public participation in Zapatista actions between now and the end of ARS Electronica.

We are also building a Zapatista Spider to hit specific URLs.

### 1.3 Infrastructure and Swarm Tactics

Digital Zapatismo also calls for the development of mobile infrastructures consisting of multiorganizational networks. This would be done by bringing together independent infrastructure nodes (The Thing in NYC , CADRE Institute, San Jose, California, groups on La Neta, in Mexico, and nodes in Europe).

These nodes would investigate the development of mobile infrastructures of defense and security of a server to be setup in a Zapatista Community in Chiapas. To protect Zapatista sites and actions from counter-attacks via remote firewall setups and the training of the Zapatista nodes in Chiapas.

Finally, and most importantly, to develop a process by which the the myth of \*CyberZapatistas\* in Chiapas can be made into a Reality. To create a network of supplies to build a mobile digital infrastructure in the Lacondona jungle as soon as possible and by any means necessary.

Ricardo Dominguez

### Electronic Civil Disobedience

# How To Jam an Opponent's Fax Machine

by L.A Kauffman

Through the tactic of the fax jam, a small group of determined activists armed only with modems can send a very strong message to the political opponent of their choice.

These simple instructions will show you how to conduct a very effective fax jam campaign, without running afoul of the law. The tips were developed after a New York City activist was arrested and charged with aggravated harassment for fax jamming the city's Chamber of Commerce, in protest against its role in the demolition of community gardens.

## Three cautions:

1. A full-scale fax jam is usually most effective fairly late in a pressure campaign, after less disruptive tactics have failed.
2. The person responsible for dealing with the fax mess is usually someone other than your actual target. If you're doing very intense prolonged fax jams, consider sending flowers to the clerical worker(s).
3. Any individual who is asked to stop faxing by a specific target should do so, to avoid any possibility of a civil suit.

## What you need:

1. A group of activists connected by email.

The members of your list should be people who are committed enough to some time each week taking part in a fax jam.

2. The fax number(s) of your opponents.

This step can sometimes entail a bit of research, for it requires first pinpointing specific individuals who have the power to take the action you want: say, the City Commissioner who has the power to pull a community garden off the auction block.

The best way to get the actual fax number is the direct route: asking for it. As in, "What's the number for faxes to So-and- So?" The receptionist will almost always give the number without further ado. Note: If you're planning to go after multiple targets in a single institution, try to get all the numbers you need before the fun begins.

3. A coordinator to call the jams.

Some jams are planned well in advance (to fall, say, on the anniversary of some heinous deed); these are best announced through an alert mailed one to two days beforehand. Others are called as a nearly instantaneous response to an event.

What the faxers do next is write a letter to the target(s) of choice, using their word processing software. They write in 72 point type, one word to a page. The resulting saved file can be hundreds of pages long.

At that point, all that's necessary to send the fax is to fire up the fax-modems and, using any standard fax software, send the file. Voila: Major disruption with minimal effort.



## *Stefan Wray*

*electronic civil disobedience*

*writing*

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*links*

## writing: stefan wray

1998

*Bottom Up Information Warfare Theory and Practice Version 1.0*

*Paris Salon or Boston Tea Party*

*Rhizomes Nomads and Resistant Internet Use*

*The Electronic Disturbance Theater and Electronic Civil Disobedience*

*Transforming Luddite Resistance into Virtual Luddite Resistance*

*Die Umwandlung des Widerstands der Maschinenstürmer in einen virtuellen Widerstand*

*On Electronic Civil Disobedience*

1997

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*Photos of U.S. Embassy in Mexico City*

*Looking For Ideas on Networks in Encuentro Documents*

*Toward Equalizing the Net*

*Big Mountain Resources* (First HTML Work)

1996

*Information Warfare* section of *The Revolution Will Be Digitized*.

*From the Old Enclosures of the Land to the New Enclosures of Cyberspace.*  
Pamphlet.

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"Encuentro 1996." (sub)TEX No. 10 (November).

"The Revolution Will Be Digitized: Interview with Tamara V. Ford."  
(sub)TEX No. 10 (November).

"Zapatistas Versus Techno Warriors of the 21st Century." (sub)TEX No. 9  
(February/March).

1994

"Federal Government to Eliminate Salvadoran's Temporary Protection Status." *Exodus* 1 (10), December.

*Anti-Immigrant Voices. An Analysis of the Anti-Immigration Movement in California and the United States.* Pamphlet.

"Anti-Immigrant Hysteria: Nip it in the Bud." *Discourse*. Vol. 3, No. 3 (February/March).

Articles in the *Golden Gater*, San Francisco State University.

1993

*The Watched Campus. San Francisco State Under Surveillance.* Pamphlet.

1992

Articles in *The Web*, a San Francisco political newsletter.

1991 and 1992

Articles in the *Street Sheet*, San Francisco Coalition on Homelessness.

1990

"Anarchy in Eastern Europe!" *Anarchy: A Journal of Desire Armed*. No. 20, Summer.

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# *resume: stefan wray*

## *Education*

- Ph.D., New York University, Media Ecology, In Progress.
- M.A., University of Texas at Austin, Journalism, summa cum laude, August 1997.
- B.A., San Francisco State University, Journalism, cum laude, 1995.
- A.S., Community College of Allegheny County, Energy Technology, 1985.

## *Conferences*

- The World Wide Web and Contemporary Cultural Theory, Des Moines, IA, 1998, presenter.
- Ars Electronica Festival on Information Warfare, Linz, Austria, 1998, presenter.
- Grassroots News Network Conference and Cultural Jam, 1998, presenter.
- Union for Democratic Communication, 1998, presenter.
- Social Scholars Conference, New York, 1998, presenter.
- Media and Democracy Congress II, New York, 1997.
- Media and Democracy Congress I, San Francisco, 1996.
- Money and Politics, Institute for Alternative Journalism, San Francisco, 1994.
- The Future of Journalism, San Francisco State University, 1994.

## *Professional Experience*

- Instructor, Department of Culture and Communication, New York University, Sept. 1997 to present.
- Independent Researcher, Colegio de Mexico, Mexico City, 1996.
- Contributing Editor, (sub)TEX, Austin, Texas, 1996.
- Micropower Radio Consultant, 105.9 FM, San Marcos, Texas, 1996.
- Human Rights Delegate, Global Exchange Delegation to Mexico, 1996.
- Teaching Assistant, University of Texas at Austin, Texas, 1995 - 1996.
- Radio News Intern, KPFA Radio, Berkeley, California, 1995.
- Information Manager, U.S. Census Bureau, Oakland, California, 1995.
- Editor and Reporter, Golden Gater, San Francisco State University, California, 1994.
- Publicist, East Bay Sanctuary Covenant, Berkeley, California, 1994.
- Building Engineer Assistant, Cesar Chavez Student Union, SFSU, California, 1992 - 1993.
- Contributing Editor, The Web, San Francisco, California, 1992.
- Promotional Writer, San Francisco Coalition on Homelessness, California, 1991 - 1992.
- Community Networker, Seeds of Peace, Berkeley, California, 1990 - 1991.
- Fact Checker and Data Base Manager, InterCom, Berkeley, California, 1990.
- Assistant Organizer, East-West Conference in Trieste, Italy, 1990.
- Assistant Editor, Europe Against the Current Media Festival, Amsterdam, 1989.
- International Volunteer, Architects and Planners in Solidarity with Nicaragua, 1988.
- Construction Worker, California, Oregon, Washington, DC, 1985 - 1990.

## *Awards*

- Teaching Fellowship, New York University



- Ada Frances Miller Fellowship, University of Texas at Austin
- Readers Digest Foundation Grant, University of Texas at Austin
- Global Exchange Scholarship, University of Texas at Austin
- Readers Digest Travel Grant, University of Texas at Austin
- Institute for Alternative Journalism Scholarship, University of Texas at Austin
- Shell Foundation Grant, University of Texas at Austin
- Institute for Latin American Studies Travel Grant, University of Texas at Austin
- Tinker Foundation Research Grant, University of Texas at Austin

### *Affiliations*

- The Electronic Disturbance Theater
- New York Free Media Alliance
- Union for Democratic Communication

### *home*

## *biography: stefan wray*

Stefan Wray began a doctoral program in Media Ecology at New York University in September, 1997. He completed a masters degree in journalism from the University of Texas at Austin in May, 1997, where he wrote a thesis called The Drug War and Information Warfare in Mexico, and a bachelors degree in journalism in 1995 from San Francisco State University.

While at the University of Texas, Wray received support from the Shell Foundation, the Tinker Foundation, and the University of Texas and he was awarded scholarships from the Ada Frances Miller Endowed Graduate Fund, the Readers Digest Foundation, The Institute for Alternative Journalism, The Institute for Latin American Studies and Global Exchange.

In Austin, Wray was a contributing editor and writer for (sub)TEX, a graduate student produced newspaper. His writing about Information Warfare was part of a Rockefeller Foundation funded CD-ROM project about the Zapatistas called The Revolution Will Be Digitized.

At San Francisco State University, he was an award winning editor and reporter for the student newspaper, the Golden Gater. In San Francisco his writings appeared in The Web, Street Sheet, Discourse and Exodus. He was a news intern at Pacifica's KPFA radio in Berkeley.

Wray grew up in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, graduating from high school in 1978. In the last 20 years he has lived in Arizona, California, Indiana, North Carolina, Oregon, Texas, Vermont, Washington, DC, and West Virginia and now New York. Since first traveling to Mexico in 1983, he has been back at least half a dozen times. In Nicaragua in 1988 he built houses with a group of volunteers. He first visited Europe in 1986 and in 1989 and 1990 traveled and worked in mostly Italy, Germany, and The Netherlands.

He has been an assistant editor, assistant organizer, community networker, contributing editor, data base manager, fact checker, independent researcher, information manager, international volunteer, micropower radio consultant, news editor, radio news intern, reporter, promotional writer, publicist, and teaching assistant, and instructor.

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# *links*

*(not finished yet)*

*Media Activism*

*Intercontinental Zapatismo*

*Against Neoliberalism*

*Information Warfare*

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October 31, 1998

# 'Hacktivists' of All Persuasions Take Their Struggle to the Web

By AMY HARMON

Until they declared "Netwar" against the Mexican government, Ricardo Dominguez and Stefan Wray earned their activist credentials the old-fashioned way, attending rallies in support of the Zapatista rebels, handing out pamphlets, shouting political slogans.

Now, the two New Yorkers organize "virtual sit-ins" and recruit computer programmers to attack the World Wide Web sites of any person or company they deem responsible for oppression. Their new rallying cry: "The revolution will be digitized."

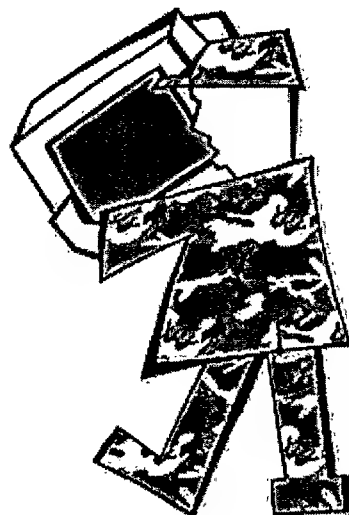
Wray, 37, and Dominguez, 39, are co-founders of the **Electronic Disturbance Theater**. It is one of several groups around the world that are beginning to experiment with computer hacking, so far largely nuisance attacks and the equivalent of electronic graffiti, as a means to a political end.

"We see this as a form of electronic civil disobedience," Wray told a group of about 75 people who had gathered in New York's East Village for an "anti-Columbus Day" event in October. "We are transferring the social-movement tactics of trespass and blockade to the Internet."

The notion is a departure for both radical activists and hackers, whose distinct, subversive subcultures have rarely intersected until recently. In some ways, the two psychologies are polar opposites.

Hackers, while reliably anti-authoritarian, tend to limit their critique of the military-industrial complex to its imperfect computer security apparatus. Enamored of their image as the cowboys of the electronic frontier, most at least pay lip service to the hacker mantra, "information wants to be free."

But whatever capacity they might have to disrupt the social order has so far been largely restricted to pointless vandalism and pinching the occasional credit card number.



Christine M. Thompson

X  
Jin

Political activists, on the other hand, preoccupied as they are with the power structure, have typically paid little heed to the information infrastructure on which it rests. Motivated by the desire for social change, they generally see building communities of support and cooperation as essential.

But the rapid growth of the Internet has transformed what was once a hacker playground into, among other things, a far-reaching political platform. What's more, the tricks invented by hackers have become easier for activists to learn and adopt because they are now widely published on how-to Web sites.

As a result, radical groups are discovering what hackers have always known: Traditional social institutions are more vulnerable in cyberspace than they are in the physical world. Likewise, some members of the famously sophomoric hacker underground are finding motivation in causes other than ego gratification.

In recent months, groups as diverse as the Animal Liberation Front, a militant animal-rights group; Radio4All, which supports pirate broadcasting, and international teams of teen-agers with cyber pseudonyms like Milworm and causes like anti-imperialism have increasingly begun pumping political protest through the Internet's security holes.

On Oct., 27, a day after China's human rights agency announced its new Web site, the official view of that nation's human rights record was replaced with an electronic trespasser's manifesto: "China's people have no rights at all, never mind human rights. How can the United States trade millions and millions of dollars with them and give them most-favored trade status when they know what is happening?"

Earlier in October, computer intruders scrawled "Save Kashmir" over the opening screen of a Web site that the Indian government set up last summer to provide information about the region, whose ownership is disputed by Pakistan and several separatist groups. The hacked site included photographs of Kashmiris allegedly killed by Indian forces, overlaid with the words "massacre" and "extra-judicial execution."

In June, after the Indian government conducted nuclear tests, college students in Britain and the Netherlands claimed credit for placing the image of a mushroom cloud on the Web site of India's major nuclear weapons research center.

In September, Portuguese hackers modified the sites of 40 Indonesian servers to display the slogan "Free East Timor" in large black letters, and they added hypertext links to Web sites describing Indonesian human rights abuses in the former Portuguese colony.

No slouches in packaging and self-promotion, the burgeoning computer underground has adopted a catchy term for the trend: they call it "hacktivism."



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Pentagon Hacking  
(March 10, 1998)

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"Hacktivism is a way to be heard by millions," a group of three Mexican hackers known as X-Ploit wrote in an e-mail message to a reporter. "We want to speak out about what we and many, many people disagree with in this treasonous and corrupt government. If we protest both on line and off line, we'll have better chances to see a change."

The tactic is not limited to one end of the political spectrum. A group of Serbian computer hackers this month claimed responsibility for crashing a Web site promoting the ethnic Albanian cause in the Serbian province of Kosovo. The Serbian newspaper Blic quoted one of the hackers as saying, "We shall continue to remove ethnic Albanian lies from the Internet."

Wednesday, the group, called Black Hand, after a clandestine Serbian military organization at the turn of the century, attacked the site of the Croatian state-owned newspaper Vjesnik. Croatian hackers counterattacked the next day, inserting messages like "Read Vjesnick and not Serbian books" on the Web site of the Serbian National Library, Vjesnik reported Friday.

Guerrilla attacks on Web sites may seem more of a headline-grabbing ploy than true information warfare. But security experts said the recent spate of digital vandalism underscores the risk to companies and governments that increasingly rely on the Internet for commerce and communication.

"What this demonstrates is the capacity of groups with political causes to hack into systems," said Michael Vatis, chief of the National Information Protection Center, a new federal agency formed to protect the nation's crucial infrastructure. "I wouldn't characterize vandalizing Web sites as cyber-terrorism, but the only responsible assumption we can make is there's more going on that we don't know about."

Established by Attorney General Janet Reno this year, the center is in part a response to the perception that "political forces which could not take on the United States in conventional military terms stand a better chance on an electronic battlefield," said Vatis.

The potency of the sling-shot approach is not lost on would-be hacktivists, either. "If you have 10 people at a protest, they don't do much of anything," said a Toronto-based computer jockey who calls himself Oxblood Ruffian. "If you have 10 people on line, they could cripple a network."

Oxblood is a member of Cult of the Dead Cow, a hacker group that recently reserved the Web address [www.hacktivism.org](http://www.hacktivism.org) as an Internet distribution hub for tools to assist others in subversive digital activism. He said the group was planning to attack the Internet operations of U.S. companies doing business with China.

But the effectiveness of such actions is unclear, prompting a debate over how best to implement the hacktivist brand of political protest.

Under U.S. law, terrorism is defined as an act of violence for the purpose of intimidating or coercing a government or a civilian population. And breaking into a computer system and altering data are felonies.

For that reason, the members of the **Electronic Disturbance Theater** emphasize that the software they use to attack Web sites disrupts Internet traffic but does not destroy data. In the tradition of civil disobedience protests, they encourage mass participation and use their real names.

The group was forged in an online discussion among several American supporters of the Zapatistas, the first armed revolutionaries known to have solicited public sympathy for their struggle by publishing their communiques over the Internet.

On Nov. 22, the group says, it plans to attack the Web site of the School for the Americas, a U.S. Army training center for foreign military personnel, some of whom have been accused of human rights abuses.

Recent targets have included the sites of Mexican President Ernesto Zedillo and of the U.S. Defense Department.

When online activists heed the call to "commence flooding!" they visit the group's Web site and click on an icon that launches a program called FloodNet. The software points their Web browser to the target of the attack, where it requests the same page over and over again at a rate of about 10 times per minute.

This tactic is a variation of what is known in Internet security-speak as a "denial of service attack." An unusually large volume of requests will overwhelm the computer that is serving up the target's Web pages. This can cause legitimate visitors to see error messages instead of the pages they are seeking, and it can even crash the server computer.

"This isn't cyber-terrorism," insisted Carmin Karasic, a Quincy, Mass., software engineer who designed the FloodNet program. "It's more like conceptual art."

The U.S. Defense Department does not agree. Alerted to a planned FloodNet attack on its public site on Mexican Independence Day, the agency responded by diverting the requests to a nonexistent Internet address, a spokesman said.

"If it wasn't illegal it was certainly immoral -- there are other constructive methods of electronic protest," the spokesman said.

The victims of such attacks are not the only ones to criticize the digital desperados. In their quest for support from a public already suspicious of hackers and anxious about online safety, some political activists deride such methods as counterproductive.

And hackers faithful to the ethic of electronic exploration for its own sake deride Web site intrusions as the work of "script kiddies," an epithet for people who break into systems by using schemes developed by others rather than by searching out new security holes of their own. Script kiddies have been responsible for a recent surge in attacks throughout the Internet -- of which politically motivated hacks are a small fraction.



Barbara Alper for The New York Times

But in e-mail and telephone interviews, several hackers promoting a political agenda -- all of whom refused to give their real names -- insisted that their motives were pure.

Increasingly, activists have adopted computer hacking as a tool. Stefan Wray, Carmin Karasic and Ricardo Dominguez of the **Electronic Disturbance Theater** spoke at a panel discussion in New York this month.

"We have hundreds of servers we could hack, and we don't," said Secretos, a Portuguese hacker in his early 20's whose group, the Kaotik Team, has taken up the cause of East Timor independence. "By contrary, we even help them to fix their bugs. The main objective of our hacking pages is to transmit the message. It is not, 'We are groovy, we have power.'"

John Vranesevitch, editor of Antionline, an Internet publication that tracks hacker activities, said the apparent political awakening among hackers reflects a generation's coming of age.

"We're starting to see right now the first generation of people who have grown up on the Internet," said Vranesevitch, who at 19 counts himself among that group. "These hackers are entering the ages where people are most politically active. This is their outlet."

And some are trying to make that outlet more accessible. A 26-year-old University of Toronto dropout calling himself Perl Bailey, after a computer language popular among Web developers, said he had earned a living as a software developer and had dabbled in not entirely legal computer exploration for several years. Now, he is writing a tool to arm computer novices with basic hacktivist techniques.

"After you reach a certain point, it feels like you are dressed up with nowhere to go," he said. "I want to make people doing questionable business dealings with countries that have no respect for human rights worry that someone who doesn't have a grade school education can sit down and go click-click and create havoc. To me that to me is very powerful."

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**1 R E D NEWS**

updated 9:00 a.m. 5.Nov.98.PST

## Pentagon Deflects Web Assault

by Niall McKay

9:55am 10.Sep.98.PDT

The Pentagon struck back against Internet activists who attempted to hold an "online sit-in" Wednesday at the Defense Department's main Web site. The attack, which attempted to overwhelm the Web servers, also targeted sites for the Frankfurt Stock Exchange and the president of Mexico.

"Our support personnel were aware of this planned electronic civil disobedience attack and were able to take appropriate countermeasures," said Defense Department spokeswoman Suzan Hansen.

The group of Internet activists, who call themselves Electronic Disturbance Theater, support the Zapatista rebels in Chiapas, fighting against the Mexican government. To draw attention to this cause, they attempted to temporarily disable certain Web sites by asking demonstrators to load a hostile Web-based program called FloodNet.

But the Pentagon said that the FloodNet attack -- which attempts to overwhelm Web servers by requesting multiple pages simultaneously -- didn't get far. The Defense Department hinted that electronic countermeasures fended off the protesters.

"Measures were taken to send the countless demands [from the attacker's servers] into the great beyond," Hansen said.

Participants in the FloodNet protest needed only to load the FloodNet Web page. The page contained a Java applet configured to request and load the three target Web sites every three seconds. The Electronic Disturbance Theater estimated that up to 10,000 people took part in the demonstration, delivering 600,000 hits to each of the three Web sites per minute.

The automated rapid-fire requests are designed to overwhelm the target Web sites so they cannot be viewed by their intended audience, known as a "denial of service" attack.

The Pentagon's Web-site support team apparently struck back with a Java applet of its own. That applet sensed requests from the FloodNet servers, and loaded -- and reloaded -- an empty browser window on the attacker's desktop. The move forced the protesters to reboot their computers:

The Electronic Disturbance Theater declared the protest a success.

"Our interest is to help the people of Chiapas to keep receiving the international recognition that they need to keep them alive," said Brett Stalbaum, a member of Electronic Disturbance Theater and author of the FloodNet software.

The group described its action as electronic civil disobedience -- a relatively new phenomena, according to a lecturer with the Department of Economics at University of Texas at Austin.

"In a lot of ways it is simply the modern version of the tradition of civil disobedience," Harry Cleaver said "But there are a lot of problems associated with it. For instance, should US protesters have the right to protest on a foreign government's Web site?"

For Stalbaum, the answer is yes.

"We protested the Mexican president's site for an obvious reason," he said. "We protested the

Pentagon site because we believe that the US military trained the soldiers carrying out the human rights abuses at the School of the Americas."

However the action at the Frankfurt Stock Exchange was a symbolic protest against globalization, which is at the root of the Chiapas' problems, according to Stalbaum.

Officials at the Frankfurt Stock Exchange were aware of the protest but believed that it had not affected their services. "We get about 6 million hits a day," said a spokesman. "We were not aware of any reduction in services today."

The action was funded by a US\$4,500 grant from RTMARK, (pronounced "artmark") an activist group dedicated to anti-corporate activism by channeling funds from donors to workers.

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## Hey, Ho, We Won't Go Civil Disobedience Comes to the Web

[Jeanne Carstensen](#)

When I think of civil disobedience I think of an environmentalist chained to a redwood or anti-war activists stretched out on the tracks in front of trains loaded with weapons headed for Central America. There are bodies on the line. And although most acts of civil disobedience are nonviolent, there is always the possibility that blood will be spilled.

So when I read a message on a Bay Area events e-mail list I subscribe to announcing a "virtual sit-in" at the website of Mexican President Ernesto Zedillo on April 10 to protest repression against the Zapatistas in Chiapas, the idea sounded strange. Civil disobedience in cyberspace? Will it work without the breath and bulk of angry bodies?

The concept "electronic civil disobedience" emerged from the sophisticated global internet activism of the Zapatistas and their supporters. Since their uprising in 1994, the Zapatistas have taken advantage of the web to circulate rapid-fire e-mail from the charismatic Commandante Marcos about conditions inside Chiapas. And Zapatista supporters have flooded web sites and discussion groups with human rights reports and articles that are updated on a daily basis.

The web has been so influential in the Zapatista struggle, that the conflict is often referred to as a kind of information war. "This is a war of public opinion, a war of declarations and political positions..." a top national security

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officer in Mexico said in a recent New York Times article ("Mexico Sees Both Carrot and Stick Fail in Chiapas," 5/17/98).

And on the web, the Zapatistas are winning. Every day a community of savvy cyber-activists helps spread the message of the largely indigenous movement in southern Mexico to the entire world.

Two of those activists, Stefan Wray and Ricardo Dominguez, are the main proponents of "electronic civil disobedience" and the organizers of the recent "virtual sit-ins" supporting the Zapatista cause. Wray hosts a web site dedicated to the theory and practice of electronic civil disobedience and Dominguez is the editor of The Thing, a small ISP for an artists virtual community.

Ricardo Dominguez, 39, is a former actor and long-time political activist. He talks about electronic civil disobedience in terms of "theater." In fact, the series of ECD actions Wray and Dominguez have planned are referred to as "Electronic Disturbance Theater." Like the Yippies, Greenpeace, Act Up and other activists who have used the media to draw attention to their causes, Dominguez appreciates the power of narrative to capture the public attention.

"We began to notice that 80s activist tactics were getting less media attention," Dominguez explained. "Power had shifted from the streets to the information highway so we started thinking about how to create political gestures on the web equivalent to lying down in the street and refusing to move."

The idea of conducting "virtual sit-ins" actually originated in Italy with the Autonomous Digital Coalition, which suggested that Zapatista supporters on the internet connect their browsers to a pre-selected site at a certain hour and manually hit the reload button over and over again as a form of protest. The intention was to temporarily overload the capacity of the server, thus disrupting service and effectively "blockading" the entrance to the targeted website.

But Dominguez and some other activists decided to take the virtual sit-in process a step further by automating it. They created a website called Flood Net that uses a Java applet to automatically reload the web page of the targeted site every three seconds. When the first virtual sit-in was held on April 10 at Zedillo's web site, all the cyber-protesters had to do was connect their browsers to Flood Net at the appointed hour.

Because a stats program is installed on the Flood Net site, Wray and Dominguez know that 8141 surfers hit their site that day and participated in the sit-in. Some disruption in Zedillo's site was noted by the activists, and the New York Times Cyber Law Journal on May 1 quoted a Mexican Embassy official who acknowledged that there had been some disturbance to Zedillo's site on April 10.

Another virtual sit-in was held on May 10, this time targeting the White House website. Wray and Dominguez didn't notice any significant disruption to the White House site, which Dominguez assumes "has a more robust infrastructure" than Zedillo's site. "This is experimental," Stefan Wray explained about the sit-in process. "We don't know what critical mass is for a site to be blocked."

The interesting thing about the virtual sit-in tactic is that it makes use of a public function available to any internet user. Reloading a page again and again, while capable of causing disruption, isn't hacking into the system. "We're interested in creating public gestures in the public sphere of the internet," Dominguez emphasized.

Civil disobedience is defined in Robert Seeley's Handbook of Non-Violence as "the refusal on principle to obey an unjust law." One of its main goals "is to influence public opinion to change an unjust law or abolish unjust policy."

Mike Godwin, staff counsel to the Electronic Frontier Foundation, said that a virtual sit-in is "no more or less illegal than tying up the White

House switchboard." The law makes a distinction between harrassing content and actions. "It's legal when calling in to voice a complaint and illegal when you're purposefully trying to jam the switchboard."

In the May 1 New York Times Cyber Law Journal article, however, internet consultant Mark D. Rasch said that "participants in electronic sit-ins run a risk of violating a federal law... [that] makes it a crime to intentionally distribute a program...with the intent to cause damage to another's web site."

"Is it illegal to refresh a web site over and over?" Wray answered when I asked him about the legality of virtual sit-ins. "I don't see any clear directive that says this is illegal. We're walking into territory that hasn't been clearly regulated or controlled so it's hard for us or the government to know where we stand."

Although the Electronic Disturbance Theater sit-ins are designed to pressure the Mexican government to respect the human rights of the indigenous communities in Chiapas that the Zapatistas represent, some people see risks in restricting free speech on the web to achieve that goal: "Why do you need to shut out anyone from speaking out on the web when you can use the same medium to express your own views?" Mike Godwin said.

Maureen Mason, program director of the Institute for Global Communications (IGC), an ISP for progressive organizations and individuals based in San Francisco, drew distinctions between different kinds of possible civil disobedience actions. Last July, IGC was the target of a "mail-bombing" campaign against one of the websites they host, the Basque Euskal Herria Journal. The huge volume of repetitive e-mail overwhelmed their server, and they were forced to suspend the Basque web site in order to continue to serve their other clients.

IGC has issued a statement condemning mail-bombing, but Mason believes that political speech itself should be protected. "The

expression of a political opinion should be allowed, but if technology is used to shut down a communication service all together, then it's like burning the bookstore to protest one book," she said.

It's too early to predict how electronic civil disobedience will evolve on the web, and whether it will ever have the same impact as a group of anti-war activists smearing human blood on a missile, as they did last week at Andrews Air Force Base. There's something so powerful about people using their own bodies to protest injustice, and that will never happen on the net. But in our increasingly virtual world, electronic civil disobedience is a very effective tactic.



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Jeanne Carstensen is Entertainment Editor of the Gate. When not trying to escape to Costa Rica, where she worked as a shortwave radio producer for six years, she likes to eat arroz con pollo, read Jeanette Winterson, and occasionally live out her fantasy of being a nurse.  
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## Technology | CYBERTIMES

The New York Times  
ON THE WEB

May 1, 1998

### CYBER LAW JOURNAL

By CARL S. KAPLAN **ETC**

## For Their Civil Disobedience, the 'Sit-In' Is Virtual

By CARL KAPLAN

**D**on't call them hackers. Ricardo Dominguez and Stefan Wray consider themselves theorists and practitioners of "electronic civil disobedience."

And they plan to show what that newly coined term means in an online protest on May 10, on behalf of embattled Indian rebels in Mexico. On that day they will try to rally supporters around the world to temporarily disrupt -- but not destroy -- a still-to-be-determined Web site in Mexico or elsewhere in North America supportive of the policies of the Mexican government.



Credit: Rene Perez for CyberTimes

"A cyber-terrorist acts anonymously and destructively a great deal of the time," said Dominguez, 39, a soft-spoken New York-based political activist, artist and computer technician. "But electronic civil disobedience, like its [real-world] antecedents, is about putting yourself on the line in a nonviolent way."

And unlike a classic act of real-word protest, for which students might perform a sit-in in front of a local consulate or in the office of a university president, the nature of the Internet allows for "a virtual sit-in on a mass, global level," Dominguez said.

Wray, a 37-year old graduate student at New York University who hosts a

personal Web site devoted to the theory of electronic civil disobedience, added: "Why should we be anonymous? Obviously, we don't believe we are doing anything wrong."

Dominguez and Wray, who have known each other for several years, are both active in Internet-based organizations that support the Zapatista rebels in Mexico. Since the uprising of the mainly Indian guerrillas of the Zapatista National Liberation Army in 1994, Web-based human rights and progressive organizations around the world have networked with each other and the rebels to trade information on the tense situation in the Mexican state of Chiapas. The groups have also sent e-mails and faxes to Mexican officials to protest Mexican government policy.

But this traditional form of Web-based grass-roots organizing and informational exchange is taking a sharp turn into the future.

Last January, for example, a group of political activists from Italy, called the Anonymous Digital Coalition, posted a message in the Zapatista networks calling for a virtual sit-in at one of five Mexican sites on January 29, from 4 to 5 p.m., Greenwich Mean Time. The announcement suggested that "all netsurfers with ideals of justice" connect their browsers to one of the selected sites at the appointed time and manually hit the "reload" button every few seconds for the hour.

For Dominguez, who, among other things, works as editor of The Thing, a small ISP based in New York, and who has also written on the subject of "infowar" and electronic civil disobedience, the posting from Italy came as revelation. He decided that, along with some other artists and computer technicians, he would take the virtual sit-in tactic one step further.

Dominguez and two colleagues, including Brett Stalbaum, an artist and programmer based in San Jose, quickly designed a Web site called Flood Net, which automates the process of the virtual sit-in.

The way it works is simple: a Web surfer connects to Flood Net, which appears on the Internet only at an appointed time, so as to avoid detection. Flood Net automatically connects the surfer to a pre-selected Web site, and the software automatically hits the selected site's reload button every seven seconds. If thousands of surfers connect with Flood Net during a particular day, the mass of activists could disrupt the operations of the particular site.

In an early test of their system, Dominguez and Wray posted messages in the Zapatista networks in early April, calling for colleagues to link to Flood Net on April 10. The target that day was the Web site of President Ernesto Zedillo of Mexico. According to Dominguez, 8,141 surfers around the world connected to Flood Net that day, which resulted in some slowing down and interruption of the Zedillo site. Dominguez added that a computer from Mexico tried to hack into Flood Net and disable its program, but was unsuccessful.



A spokesperson for the Mexican Embassy in Washington, D.C., acknowledged that there was a protest action aimed at government Web sites on April 10. Although there was some disturbance, "there wasn't much negative impact," the spokesperson said.

On May 10, Mother's Day, Dominguez and Wray expect to roll out Flood Net for another spin. They say the targeted site, which will be selected at the last moment, could be in Mexico or elsewhere in North America. Dominguez said the targeted site would be selected for its symbolic value. "We're not out to interfere with a site that has valuable data," he said.

Dominguez added that he expects several Flood Net "mirror sites" to crop up on May 10 -- ensuring some measure of security from possible counter-action.

Recently, at the spare West Side offices of The Thing, Dominguez and Wray talked about their views of electronic civil disobedience. Dominguez, a former actor, has a low, deep voice and speaks in measured tones. Wray, who sports a mandatory graduate student beard, was more casual.

Both conceded that the tactics of the virtual sit-in would not directly force the Mexican government to change its policies. But that is not the point, they said. Rather, the protest tactic is designed to create a form of electronic theater that indirectly increases solidarity among activists and propagates a political message to "other layers" of the Internet.

The pair also acknowledged that their tactic is not universally condoned by their colleagues. One human rights group in Mexico, they said, recently posted a message objecting to the April invasion of Mexican cyberspace and questioned whether the electronic sit-in would invite retaliation. For these reasons, the friends said, they will consider targeting a site in the United States on May 10.

They do not think they are breaking any law. And even if they were, Dominguez said, the risks are inherent in the practice of civil disobedience.

"Sometimes if you sit in front of an office, they will say you are trespassing," he said. "The question is, whose law is more important -- the law of human rights or the local law of trespassing."

Mark D. Rasch, an Internet consultant and former head of the Justice Department's efforts to prosecute computer crime, said in an interview that participants in electronic sit-ins run a risk of violating a federal law, 18 U.S.C., section 1030 (a)(5)(A). That statute, he said, makes it a crime to intentionally distribute a program, software code or command with the intent to cause damage to another's Web site.

"These guys are at risk," said Rasch, referring to Dominguez and Wray and

their colleagues. "It may be an electronic sit-in, but people get arrested at sit-ins," he said.

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David Ronfeldt, a senior social scientist at the Rand Corporation, a think tank in Santa Monica, Calif., is an expert on information age conflicts. He thinks electronic civil disobedience as practiced by Dominguez and Wray is not benign.

Internet links of  
interest to Cyber  
Law Journal  
readers

"I see it somewhere between a digital sit-in and 'cybotage,' " he said. "They are trying to crash Web pages and servers. It's aggressive."

Ronfeldt, who said he has visited Wray's personal Web site, and who sent Wray an e-mail congratulating him on his theoretical essays, predicted that electronic civil disobedience will become a more common tool for political activists in the near future.

"Conflict in the information age will be more about disruption than destruction," Ronfeldt said. "And much of the disruption will be symbolic."

**CYBER LAW JOURNAL is published weekly, on Fridays. Click here for a list of links to other columns in the series.**

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#### **Related Sites**

Following are links to the external Web sites mentioned in this article. These sites are not part of The New York Times on the Web, and The Times has no control over their content or availability. When you have finished visiting any of these sites, you will be able to return to this page by clicking on your Web browser's "Back" button or icon until this page reappears.

- United States law on fraud in connection with computers
- David Ronfeldt: Recent book on netwar he co-edited
- Stefan Wray's electronic civil disobedience site

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*Carl S. Kaplan at [kaplanc@nytimes.com](mailto:kaplanc@nytimes.com) welcomes your comments and suggestions.*

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(12/31/1995)

## FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Precedence: ROUTINE

Date: 11/05/1998

To: Director, FBI

Attn: Computer Investigations  
Unit, Room 11887  
Computer Investigations  
and Infrastructure Threat  
Assessment Center  
(CID/NSD)

✓ From: SAC, New York

Approved By:

Drafted By:

b6  
b7C



Case ID #: 288-NY-268557

Title: Subject: ELECTRONIC DISTURBANCE THEATER;



Victim:

Type:

Denial of Service

Date:

September 9, 1998

SUBMISSION: ( X ) Initial ( ) Supplemental ( ) Closed

CASE OPENED: \_11\_/\_05\_/\_98\_

CASE CLOSED: \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_

- ( ) No action due to state/local prosecution (Name/Number: \_\_\_\_\_)
- ( ) USA declination
- ( ) Referred to Another Federal Agency (Name/Number: \_\_\_\_\_)
- ( ) Place in unaddressed work
- ( ) Closed administratively
- ( ) Conviction

COORDINATION: FBI Field Office: New York  
Government Agency: Department of Defense  
Private Corporation: N/A

UPLOADED

WITH/TEXT

11-19-98

e CD.801

NY-268557

SEARCHED	INDEXED
SERIALIZED	FILED
NOV 17 1998	

Handwritten signature/initials at bottom right of stamp.

To: Director, FBI From: SAC, New York  
Re: 288-NY-268557, ??

### VICTIM

Company name/Government agency: \_\_\_\_\_

Address/location: \_\_\_\_\_

Purpose of System: \_\_\_\_\_

Highest classification of information stored in system: \_\_\_\_\_

#### System Data:

Hardware/configuration (CPU): \_\_\_\_\_

Operating System: \_\_\_\_\_

Software: \_\_\_\_\_

#### Security Features:

Security Software Installed: ( ) yes (identify \_\_\_\_\_) ( ) no

Logon Warning Banner: ( ) yes ( ) no

### INTRUSION INFORMATION

**Access for intrusion:** ( X ) Internet connection ( ) dial-up number ( ) LAN (insider)

If internet: Internet address: <http://www.thing.net/~rdom/ecd.html>

Network name: N/A

#### Method:

Technique(s) used in intrusion: hostile Java Applet

#### Path of intrusion:

address: 1. \_\_\_\_ 2. \_\_\_\_ 3. \_\_\_\_ 4. \_\_\_\_ 5. \_\_\_\_

country: 1. \_\_\_\_ 2. \_\_\_\_ 3. \_\_\_\_ 4. \_\_\_\_ 5. \_\_\_\_

facility: 1. \_\_\_\_ 2. \_\_\_\_ 3. \_\_\_\_ 4. \_\_\_\_ 5. \_\_\_\_

b6  
b7C

Subject:

Age:

Race:

Sex:

Education:

Alias(s): \_\_\_\_\_ Motive: \_\_\_\_\_

Group Affiliation: Electronic Disturbance Theater

To: Director, FBI From: SAC, New York  
Re: 288-NY-268557, ??

Employer: \_\_\_\_\_  
Known Accomplices: \_\_\_\_\_

Equipment used:  
Hardware/configuration (CPU): \_\_\_\_\_  
Operating System: \_\_\_\_\_  
Software: \_\_\_\_\_

Subject: \_\_\_\_\_  
Age: \_\_\_\_\_ Race: \_\_\_\_\_  
Sex: \_\_\_\_\_ Education: \_\_\_\_\_  
Alias(s): \_\_\_\_\_ Motive: \_\_\_\_\_  
Group Affiliation: Electronic Disturbance Theater  
Employer: \_\_\_\_\_  
Known Accomplices: \_\_\_\_\_  
Equipment used:

Hardware/configuration (CPU): \_\_\_\_\_  
Operating System: \_\_\_\_\_  
Software: \_\_\_\_\_

Subject: \_\_\_\_\_  
Age: \_\_\_\_\_ Race: \_\_\_\_\_  
Sex: \_\_\_\_\_ Education: \_\_\_\_\_  
Alias(s): \_\_\_\_\_ Motive: \_\_\_\_\_  
Group Affiliation: Electronic Disturbance Theater  
Employer: \_\_\_\_\_  
Known Accomplices: \_\_\_\_\_  
Equipment used:

Hardware/configuration (CPU): \_\_\_\_\_  
Operating System: \_\_\_\_\_  
Software: \_\_\_\_\_

Subject: \_\_\_\_\_  
Age: \_\_\_\_\_ Race: UNK  
Sex: UNK Education: \_\_\_\_\_  
Alias(s): \_\_\_\_\_ Motive: \_\_\_\_\_  
Group Affiliation: Electronic Disturbance Theater  
Employer: \_\_\_\_\_  
Known Accomplices: \_\_\_\_\_  
Equipment used:

Hardware/configuration (CPU): \_\_\_\_\_  
Operating System: \_\_\_\_\_  
Software: \_\_\_\_\_

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To: Director, FBI From: SAC, New York  
Re: 288-NY-268557, ??

**Impact:**

Compromise of classified information: ( ) yes ( X ) no

Estimated number of computers affected: UNK

Estimated dollar loss to date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Category of Crime:**

**Impairment:**

- ( ) Malicious code inserted
- ( x ) Denial of Service
- ( ) Destruction of information/software
- ( ) Modification of information/software

**Theft of Information:**

- ( ) Classified information compromised
- ( ) Unclassified information compromised
- ( ) Passwords obtained
- ( ) Computer processing time obtained
- ( ) Telephone services obtained
- ( ) Application software obtained
- ( ) Operating software obtained

**Intrusion:**

- ( ) Unauthorized access
- ( ) Exceeding authorized access

---

**REMARKS**

Subject Electronic Disturbance Theater (EDT) is a group claiming on its Internet website to protest various national and international policies through orchestrated attacks on computer systems. The attacks employ a program called "FloodNet" which causes a denial of service to the target computer. EDT's Internet website solicits visitors to participate in coordinated attacks of a computer system chosen by EDT. Participants simply click on the FloodNet icon on the EDT's website at a predetermined and published date and time. This icon then initiates a Java applet which repeatedly reloads

To: Director, FBI From: SAC, New York  
Re: 288-NY-268557, ??

files from a victim's computer system at a unusually high rate. This activity, when multiplied by many users, will cause service interruptions and possibly crash the server computer unless early detection is made and countermeasures are implemented. The visitors do not control the destination of the attack, rather it is programed into the applet on the EDT's website.



**Menu**  
**Technology(s) Used:**

**Top Screen**

**Secondary Screen**

**Protocol Attacks:**

- |                                     |   |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> IP         | <input type="checkbox"/> spoofing attack<br><input type="checkbox"/> source routing   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> TCP        | <input type="checkbox"/> sequence number attack   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> UDP        | <input type="checkbox"/> spoofing attack<br><input type="checkbox"/> flooding   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> FTP        | <input type="checkbox"/> vulnerable version<br><input type="checkbox"/> SITE EXEC<br><input type="checkbox"/> overload FTP buffer<br><input type="checkbox"/> anonymous FTP   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Telnet     | <input type="checkbox"/> highjacking<br><input type="checkbox"/> packet sniffing  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> TFTP       |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> r commands | <input type="checkbox"/> rsh<br><input type="checkbox"/> riogin   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> SMTP       | <input type="checkbox"/> vulnerable version<br><input type="checkbox"/> spoofing<br><input type="checkbox"/> embedded postscript attack<br><input type="checkbox"/> trojan horse attack<br><input type="checkbox"/> syslog attack<br><input type="checkbox"/> flooding<br><input type="checkbox"/> MIME |

To: Director, FBI From: SAC, New York  
Re: 288-NY-268557, ??

☐ HTTP ☐ flooding  
☐ Telnet to HTTP port

☐ gopher

☐ Xll window

**Top Screen**

**Secondary Screen**

☐ DNS ☐ vulnerable version  
☐ flooding

☐ SNMP

☐ FSP

☐ NFS

**Other Attacks:**

☐ Worm

☐ Social engineering

☐ Scavenging and reusing

☐ Masquerading

☐ Scanning

☐ Trojan Horse

☒ Other : Java Applet



288-NY-268557-13

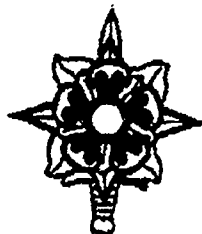
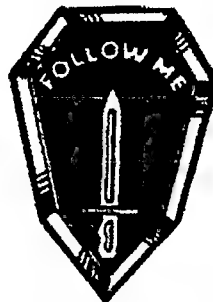
SEARCHED  
SERIALIZED CM CM  
NOV 11 1993

*[Signature]*  
"REBORN"  
SCHOOL

PLEASE REFERENCE FAX AS

"SCHOOL OF THE AMERICAS" THANK YOU.

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED  
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED  
DATE 12-28-2015 BY C32W33B91 NSICG



*SecURity*

**U.S. ARMY INFANTRY CENTER  
SECURITY DIVISION**

Commander, U.S. Army Infantry Center  
ATTN: ATZB-ISS  
Fort Benning, GA 31905-5372

(X)  
JLM

**FROM:**

b6  
b7C

**INFORMATION SYSTEMS SECURITY MANAGER**  
(706) 545-3738 DSN 835-3738  
FAX (706) 545-9084 DSN 835-9084

**TO:**

b6  
b7C

**COMMENTS:**

As promised, sorry. I'm about a day behind!

**CLASSIFICATION:**

Unclassified

**NO. PAGES:**

H+2

**DATE:**

17 Nov 98

17 November 1998



b6  
b7C per FBI

I will try to keep this brief. I want to give you some background information on Fort Benning and our network infrastructure and then a short recap of our incident thus far.

Fort Benning is a very large U.S. Army installation and is "Home of the Infantry." Our primary mission is to train Infantry soldiers, including basic training, airborne training, and Ranger school. The U.S. Army School of the Americas (USARSA) is part of the Infantry School. Our Major Command (MACOM) is the Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC); however we have other MACOM units here, including Forces Command (FORSCOM), U.S. Army Special Operations Command (USASOC), and Medical Command (MEDCOM). In addition, we have numerous tenant units, including Dependent Schools, and the U.S. Army Marksmanship Unit. Fort Benning is also a major deployment "jump-off" site. Deploying units and individuals come through Fort Benning on their way to various locations throughout the world.

We have 21,000+ military and 6,800+ civilian employees. Our network infrastructure is vast - over 4,000 desktop systems and over 100 network servers. Our primary network is Banyan Vines (70+ servers) set up in multiple local area networks (25+). In addition, we have a growing NT environment, used primarily for e-mail and web services (30+ servers). We also have several UNIX systems. Other systems connect to our infrastructure. Most of these are Department of Defense (DoD) or Department of the Army (DA) fielded systems. They include logistics (supply, transportation, hazardous materials), personnel (military and civilian), training (scheduling, student records, distance learning), and of course the "simnet" where the soldier of the future does virtual battlefield training. This is just a snap shot, not a complete picture.

Our network bandwidth is T1, 1544 kilobits. The fast Ethernet port on the security router has an input of 311,000 bits per second and an output of 290,000 bits per second. We see a whole lot of traffic on any given day (less on the weekend). Over the weekend our web site sees 800 to 1,000 hits, the USARSA site sees around 100 hits.

I was notified of the impending Electronic Disturbance Theater attack against USARSA by Bill Cotrell, U.S. Army Criminal Investigation Division (CID) and Patrick O'Brien, Defense Criminal Investigation Service (DCIS). In addition, the Army Computer Emergency Response Team (ACERT) and the Defense Information Systems Agency (DISA) ASSIST were aware of the impending attack and offered assistance.

We are concerned about this attack because to "hit" USARSA's web page, you will first "hit" the Fort Benning web site, which sits inside our infrastructure.

I spoke, via conference call, with Patrick, the ACERT, ASSIST, and persons at the Defense Technical Information Center (DTIC). The DTIC folks successfully repelled an attack from the Electronic Disturbance Theater in September.

Through conversations with CID, DCIS, and ACERT, several plans to deal with the attack were discussed. ACERT passed the mission to the Regional Computer Emergency Response Team (RCERT).

We had three people on-site the week of 9-13 November. A mini-vulnerability assessment was conducted. We were looking for significant vulnerabilities that might be exploited. A proxy engine was set up to divert traffic from our web server and hopefully protect our infrastructure.

The current plan is to have a two-man team from RCERT on-site during the attack. Our routers will be monitored from the Army Network Systems Operation Center (ANSOC) at Fort Huachuca, Arizona, and we will also set up an intrusion detection system that can be monitored real-time.

We are willing to face the brunt of the attack with the understanding that we must protect the entire infrastructure. Additional measures include backing up our critical servers and the ability to stop network services, if necessary.

Up to this point approximately 29 man-days (232 man-hours) have been expended.

Hope this helps, I wasn't as brief as I intended to be. Let me know if you need anything further and again, you are most welcome to visit us.



Information Systems Security Manager  
Fort Benning, Georgia  
(706)545-3738

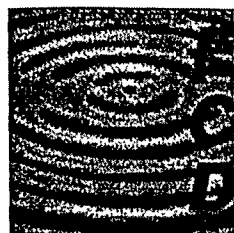
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288-NY-268557-14

SEARCHED	INDEXED
SERIALIZED <i>CM</i>	FILED <i>CM</i>
NOV 30 1998	
FBI — NEW YORK	

REFERENCE: ECD WEB PAGE - 12/22 ACTION

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED  
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED  
DATE 12-28-2015 BY C32W33B91 NSICG



# Electronic Civil Disobedience



Next Virtual Sit-in on December 22  
Anniversary of the Acteal massacre  
in Chiapas

Mid-way into the Sit-In  
at School of the Americas on  
November 22

Fort Benning countered by IP  
Blocking Address

We will post updates as more  
information flows in!

Recent Action Against  
The Thing's  
Support of FloodNet  
VIOLATION OF THE VERIO  
ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY  
Read About It On Thing.news. In  
Threads.

SWARM Chronology

Recent Virtual Sit-in against the NAB  
and the FCC

Electronic Disturbance Theater  
Hacks Frankfurt Stock Exchange

(X)  
11/2

SEA  
SER



# Electronic Civil Disobedience



Next Virtual Sit-in on December 22  
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SWARM Chronology

Recent Virtual Sit-in against the NAB  
and the FCC

Electronic Disturbance Theater  
Hacks Frankfurt Stock Exchange

288-NY-268557-16

SEARCHED INDEXED  
SERIALIZED FILED

NOV 24 1998

11-22-98 WPA

12-2-98

CM

WITHHELD BY  
RECEIVED

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED  
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED  
DATE 12-28-2015 BY C32W33B91 NSICG



- 1 -

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Date of transcription 11/23/98

On November 20, 1998, SA [ ] spoke with [ ] member of the U.S. Army's Regional Computer Emergency Response Team (RCERT), and [ ] Fort Benning's Information Systems Security Manager, regarding [ ] ELECTRONIC DISTURBANCE THEATER's (EDT) flood attack of the School of the America's web site on November 22, 1998. [ ] informed SA [ ] that it was [ ]

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On November 21, 1998, at approximately 11:00pm, SA [ ] accessed the ELECTRONIC DISTURBANCE THEATER's (EDT) web page located at the Uniform Resource Locator (URL) address of <http://www.thing.net/~rdom/ecd/ecd.html>. SA [ ]

[ ] SA [ ]

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SA [ ] then [ ]

On November 22, 1998, at approximately 10:00am and again at approximately 5:00pm, SA [ ]

[ ] SA [ ] SA [ ]

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Investigation on 11/22/98 at New Jersey

File # 288-NY-268557-16 Date dictated 11/23/1998

by SA [ ] JDM

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288-NY-268557

Continuation of FD-302 of ELECTRONIC DISTURBANCE THEATER, On 11/22/98, Page 2



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288-NY-268557-17

SEARCHED	CM
SERIALIZED	CM
1-3-93 1993	
[Signature]	

REFERENCE: ECD WEBPAGE 05/12/1998

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HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED  
DATE 12-28-2015 BY C32W33B91 NSICG



# Electronic Civil Disobedience



Next Virtual Sit-in on December 22  
Anniversary of the Acteal massacre  
in Chiapas

\*How To Make Trouble  
and Influence People\*

by Ian Walker

An hour long RealAudio on  
Culture Jammers around the world.  
Featuring interviews with  
RT@Mark, Adbusters,  
The Electronic Disturbance Theater,  
and many more.

Mid-way into the Sit-In  
at School of the Americas  
on November 22

Fort Benning countered  
by IP Blocking Address  
We will post updates as more  
information flows in!

Recent Action Against  
The Thing's  
Support of FloodNet  
VIOLATION OF THE VERIO  
ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY  
Read About It On Thing.news. In  
Threads.

SWARM Chronology



express

automatic pilot

|oca|

back seat driver



[join](#) [X] [tours](#) [X] [banners](#)



day  
without  
art

WEB ACTION

[day in the life](#) [X] [participants](#) [X] [credits](#)



w e b a c t i o n g o !



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[join](#) [X] [tours](#) [X] [banners](#)**day  
without art** **WEB ACTION**[day in the life](#) [X] [participants](#) [X] [credits](#)

The AIDS pandemic has had a profound impact on our world culture. What follows is a list in formation of individual artists and designers, arts organizations and other cultural and community based groups as well as commercial sites from all over the world that are linking together in digital observance of Day Without Art. We are committed to joining together to create a moment of pause -- to create a coordinated network of consciousness anchored to this day. We invite you to [join us](#) during the month of December.

[123 Watts Gallery](#)[a b e r r a t u m](#)[ACT UP](#)[aidsinfo.nyc.org](#)[AIDS Treatment Data Network](#)[Gregory Alkaitis-Carafelli Penny Arcade's Home Page](#)[The Art Gallery at the University Of Maryland](#)[Art in Context Center for Communications](#)[Being Alive: People with HIV/AIDS Action Coalition](#)[Black and White](#)[Bleakness](#)[BlondeCandy's CandyLand](#)[bluehaus](#)[Boulder County AIDS Project](#)[Brand A](#)[Mike & Bill Brunson-Kelley](#)[c3dric.com](#)[Casanova](#)[Cavil](#)[Isabel Chang](#)[Collected Visions](#)[Current](#)[Darklight](#)[The Dia Center](#)[Digital Diva showcase](#)[Digital Sushi](#)[DIVA TV \(Damned Interfering Video Activists\)](#)[disjointed.org](#)[Echo magazine](#)[Electronic Civil Disobedience](#)[Fragments](#)[Jeff Gates](#)[Gay.Net](#)[Gay Philly](#)[The Guggenheim Museum](#)[Health Education at Amherst College](#)[Hearing Voices](#)[Hearing Voices' PSAs to download](#)[Henry Art Gallery](#)[High:Rise](#)[Hoopla](#)[iambd - the less said the better](#)[impermanence.com](#)[In Our Path](#)[International Center of Photography](#)[s H A N N O N j O H N S O N](#)

[RockArtifacts](#)  
[Jordi](#)  
[George M. Karaganis](#)  
[Antoinette LaFarge](#)  
[Lambda Letters Project](#)  
[The Luscious Jackson Source](#)  
[Sarine Makdessian](#)  
[Judy Malloy](#)  
[Martina's homepage](#)  
[Mid Atlantic Arts Foundation](#)  
[The Montgomeryshire Development Project](#)  
[Mountain View High School](#)  
[mouser.org](#)  
[MT Enterprises World Wide](#)  
[The Museum of Art & Archaeology at the University of Missouri/Columbia](#)  
[The Museum of Forgery](#)  
[My Tiny Little Space of Rosie](#)  
[National Women's Caucus for Art](#)  
[Never Lukewarm](#)  
[The New Museum](#)  
[New York Foundation for the Arts](#)  
[NewsTrolls](#)

[Nexus Gallery](#)  
[NOMADS](#)  
[Picture Projects](#)  
[Pixelyze](#)  
[The Plaintext Players](#)  
[PLEXUS Art and Communication](#)  
["Prehensile Tales"](#)  
[The Princess's Castle](#)  
[Project 37](#)  
[rdom](#)  
[Don Ritter](#)  
[robikalifradulousdisexpialidocious!](#)  
[RTMARK](#)  
[runawaytrain.org](#)  
[St. Joseph Parish/Parroquia San Jos](#)  
[School of Visual Arts](#)  
[SikkOne9 - San Diego Based Punk Rock Site](#)  
[Stop The Hate](#)  
[Stunned ArtZine](#)  
[Symbiosis Collective](#)  
[tattletale.net](#)  
[TheOld SpinHell](#)

[THE THING](#)  
[Thundergulch](#)  
[Tisch School of the Arts Photography/NYU](#)  
[Tucson Computer Society](#)  
[Wanna Slurpee?](#)  
[The Working Fund for Philadelphia Area Artists with HIV/AIDS](#)  
[WORD](#)  
[XenoGraphics Art & Design](#)

[\[your site here\]](#)

[top](#)





[dwa archives](#)

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Subject: TAN Alert  
Date: Wed, 1 Dec 1998 00:00:13 -0800  
From: Treatment Action Network <[TAN@projinf.org](mailto:TAN@projinf.org)>  
To: DWA Web Action 98

Dear Day With(out) Art Web Action participants:

Below is an Action Alert designed for World AIDS Day 1998. TAN invites you to express your concern for the Federal Needle Exchange Ban. Please also forward this alert widely. It's up to us to make a difference on this issue!

Ryan Clary  
Treatment Action Network Coordinator  
Project Inform  
205-13th Street #2001  
San Francisco, CA 94114  
[tan@projinf.org](mailto:tan@projinf.org)

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CONGRESS AND THE CLINTON ADMINISTRATION CONTINUE FEDERAL NEEDLE EXCHANGE BAN Urge federal elected officials to stop neglecting individuals at risk for HIV infection! December 1, 1998

Despite the partisan politics and rhetoric that marked the 1998 federal legislative session, HIV/AIDS advocates were able to achieve many significant victories. Congress approved large increases in funding for the AIDS Drug Assistance Program and AIDS research at the National Institutes of Health. Thanks to the leadership of the Congressional Black Caucus, the Fiscal Year 1998 appropriations bill includes \$156 million for prevention and treatment services targeting African-Americans and other communities of color.

However, 1998 was also the year that the Clinton Administration failed to take action that would prevent thousands of new HIV infections. On April 20th, Secretary of Health and Human Services Donna Shalala made her long awaited declaration on federal funding for needle exchange programs. At that time, the Secretary had the authority to allow federal funding for these programs if she determined that they reduce the spread of HIV and do not increase illegal drug use.

Secretary Shalala declared that there is clear scientific evidence demonstrating that needle exchange programs meet these requirements. However, she announced that the Clinton Administration would continue the ban on using federal funds for these lifesaving programs. The decision not to fund a program based on proven public health principles appeared to be a political one and a clear statement that injection drug users are a disposable community.

Days after this announcement, some members of Congress began acting to legislate a permanent ban on federal funding for needle exchange programs. This would mean that only Congress, not the Secretary of Health and Human Services, could release the funds. Such a law would completely politicize a public health decision and make it extremely difficult to ever obtain federal dollars for these programs. While the House of Representatives did

approve this measure, the Senate never voted on a permanent ban. Instead, the final Fiscal Year 1998 funding bill contains language that puts a one year ban on funding needle exchange programs. The bill also contains language denying any federal funds to organizations in the District of Columbia that provide needle exchange services - even if those funds are for a different program. That action can effectively close most needle exchange programs in D.C., causing many needless HIV infections.

We clearly have much work to do to change this situation. Every day, 33 American men, women, and children are infected with HIV because of injection drug use. According to a June 1996 study, had there been established needle exchange programs in the United States, between 4,400 and 9,700 HIV infections could have been prevented. In addition, up to half a billion dollars in health care costs could have been avoided. The study also found that through the year 2000, an additional 11,300 cases among injection drug users, their sexual partners, and children could be prevented by providing access to needle exchange programs. **The Clinton Administration needs to know that local communities must have the right to use federal prevention dollars for such a proven humane and cost-effective program.**

Your help is needed to demonstrate strong public support for needle exchange programs!

**Action needed:**

**E-mail President Clinton and Vice-President Gore today.** Express your outrage that the Administration has failed to demonstrate leadership in the fight against AIDS by not allowing federal funding for needle exchange programs. Urge them to work with Congress to allow funds after the one year ban. You can use the sample e-mail message below to craft your message. Please encourage your family, friends, colleagues, etc. to do the same!

**Contact information:**

President Clinton  
[president@whitehouse.gov](mailto:president@whitehouse.gov)

Vice-President Gore  
[vice.president@whitehouse.gov](mailto:vice.president@whitehouse.gov)

**Sample e-mail message to copy and paste:**

Dear:

I am writing to express my disappointment in the Administration's failure to provide federal funding for needle exchange programs. Secretary Shalala has determined that these programs reduce the spread of HIV and do not increase illegal drug use. Scientific evidence, including a report commissioned by your Administration in February 1997, supports these conclusions.

Every day, 33 American men, women, and children are infected with HIV because of injection drug use. We need your strong leadership on this crucial public health issue. Please work with Congress to ensure that the federal ban on these programs is lifted as soon as possible. Your action can save thousands of lives.

Sincerely,

Your name

[top](#)

---

**Ryan Clary** is the community organizer in the public policy department of Project Inform, a national HIV/AIDS treatment information and advocacy organization based in San Francisco.

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[dwa archives](#)





# INVESTIGATIVE INFORMATION REQUEST FORM

FBI, Butte Information Technology Center  
400 North Main Street, Room #115  
Butte, Montana 59701

Commercial Telephone: [redacted]  
FTS: [redacted] FAX: [redacted]  
Secure FAX & STU III: [redacted]

ITC Use Only: Na. 9/15/98 BITS Record #: [redacted]  
Date/Time In: [redacted] ☐ am ☐ pm  
Date/Time Out: [redacted] ☐ am ☐ pm  
Database(s) Used: [redacted]  
1. [redacted] 5. [redacted] 9. [redacted]  
2. [redacted] 6. [redacted] 10. [redacted]  
3. [redacted] 11. [redacted]  
4. [redacted] 12. [redacted]  
Handled: [redacted]

TO: FBI, BUTTE INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY CENTER

Date: 9/19/98

Forfeiture/Seizure Related: ☒ Type of Request: ☒ FAX ☐ Telcal ☐ Mail

Response: ☐ Telcal ☐ Mail

Requestor: SA [redacted] (Requestor Name is Required)

Phone #: [redacted]

FAX #: [redacted]

UCFN: 288-NY-268557  
(UCFN (File #) is Required)

Office/RA: NYO

Precedence: ☒ ROUTINE ☐ IMMEDIATE  
(Emergency/Crisis Situation)

SEARCH CRITERIA (Attach additional sheets if necessary) SEE ATTACHED SHEETS (2)

Name - Last: [redacted] First: [redacted] Middle: [redacted]

Alias: [redacted] Sex: M DOB1: [redacted] DOB2: 1/1

SSAN1: [redacted] SSAN2: [redacted] Spouse: [redacted] State: NY

Fugitive: ☐ Yes ☐ No Driver's License #: [redacted]

RESIDENCE [redacted] City/State: [redacted] Zip: [redacted] Phone: [redacted]

BUSINESS [redacted] Street Address: [redacted]

Business Name: [redacted] City/State: [redacted] Zip: [redacted] Phone: [redacted] Business ID#: [redacted]

CHECK DESIRED SEARCH PARAMETERS (Please check only those that are needed)

☒ 1. Specific Information Desired ANY IDENTIFYING INFO (IE. DMV), SSAN, DOBS

☐ 2. Determine All Individuals Associated with Social Security Number(s)

☐ 3. Report Validity of Social Security Number

☐ 4. Determine Who is Associated with Telephone Number(s)

☐ 5. Determine Address of Business/Person (\_\_\_\_ U.S. \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ State(s))

☒ 6. Determine Property Owned by Individual (\_\_\_\_ U.S. \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ State(s))

☐ 7. Determine Who Owns Property Listed Above

☐ 8. Determine Who Resides at Address Listed Above

☐ 9. Determine Financial Background Info, i.e., Bankruptcy, Judgments, Liens, UCC filings, or Lawsuits

☐ 10. Determine Corporate Business Info, i.e., Officer, Director, Registered Agent \_\_\_\_\_ (Person/Business)

☒ 11. Customs Border Crossings / Subject query / I-94 info (circle one)

☐ 12. Federal Prison Inmate Information

☐ 13. Telemarketing Complaints

Reply From: FBI, Butte Information Technology Center (BITC)

Return Reply To: SAC, [redacted]

Attention: [redacted]

Based on search criteria, marked records are attached:

☒ Possible Identifiable Records ☐ Brief Synopsis of Information Found

☐ Other Peripheral Information ☐ No Information Found

288-NY-268557

DEC 03 1998

288-NY-268557

## Descriptive Data:

Main Subject

Name -

Last:

First:

Race:

Sex:

DOB:

SOC:

SOC:

Main Subject

Name -

Last:

First:

Middle:

Race:

Sex:

DOB:

POB:

Address -

House #:

Street Name:

Unit:

City:

State:

Postal Code:

Main Subject

Name -

Last:

First:

Race:

Sex:

DOB:

Address -

House #:

Street Name:

City:

State:

Postal Code:

Phone:

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Main Subject

Name -

Last:

First:

Middle:

Race:

Sex:

DOB:

Address -

House #:

Street Name:

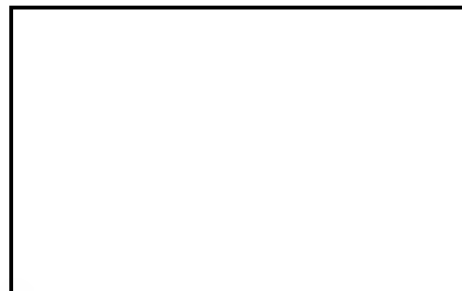
Unit:

City:

State:

Postal Code:

Phone:

A rectangular box used for redaction, covering the Name, Race, Sex, and DOB fields.

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11/98

A rectangular box used for redaction, covering the Address - field and its sub-fields.